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Understanding the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals in Japan: An intersectional approach

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Abstract

In today's global, hyper-competitive labour market, companies cannot afford to discriminate potential talent based on dimensions of diversity. LGBT+ individuals belong to a demographic that in many parts of the world faces discrimination, oppression, and the systematic denial of pursuing a dignified and authentic life. While there are no laws in Japan persecuting LGBT+ individuals, equally there are no laws protecting them. Lacking government-legislated anti-discrimination laws, corporations operating in Japan have a proactive role in determining the level of inclusion that LGBT+ individuals experience in the workplace. This paper documents the lived experiences of these individuals, in order to understand how they navigate living and working in Japan. Three different LGBT+ cohorts participated in the research across two studies. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and an Internet-based survey. A constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) approach was used to generate and analyse the data. In Study 1, Japanese LGBT+ individuals (*n* = 16) and LGBT+ expatriate individuals (*n* = 10) were interviewed. Themes that emerged from the data informed the development of two conceptual frameworks: one that described the antecedents and outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion for Japanese LGBT+ employees; and another that considered "foreigner" identity as a moderating variable in the relationship between perceived level of safety and the disclosure decision of LGBT+ expatriates in Japan. In Study 2, interviews were conducted and a short-answer survey was administered to LGBT+ expatriate couples (*n* = 26). The challenging-rewarding continuum was subsequently developed, and salient themes were expounded. Additionally, across the two studies, LGBT+ allies, including lawyers, were interviewed (*n* = 7). While numerous examples of progress toward more inclusive workplace environments were documented, overall, company policy was piecemeal at best, and exclusionary at worst with regards to LGBT+ employees. Further, intersectional analysis revealed the ways in which systems of privilege and oppression differentially affected the participants based on their unique mix of social identities, specifically along the axes of age, social gender, nationality, and marital status. This analysis demonstrated that, within the socio-historical context of Japan, LGBT+ people do not form a homogeneous group, and can experience both privilege and oppression as individuals. This has implications for company policy and practice. Now is the time for companies to take leadership, broadcasting workplace climates for inclusion, not just through words but also through concrete actions, to the international community.

Acknowledgments

Writing this paper was the single most challenging and most rewarding thing I have ever done. I wanted to give up on more than one occasion. I take this moment to express gratitude to those who helped me along this arduous journey. First to my partner Joshua: my rock, my counsel, and my editor-in-chief. You have been with me since the very beginning. Your patience and understanding never faltered. To my parents, Sue and Richard, I am grateful that you always encouraged me to pursue my own interests and to cultivate a healthy curiosity. To my brother Ben, I know you always have my back. Thank you for your love and laughter.

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List of acronyms

AA	-	Affirmative action
AFAB	-	Assigned female at birth
AMAB	-	Assigned male at birth
DA	-	Designated activities (visa). Japanese: *tokutei katsudō*
EEO	-	Equal employment opportunity
ESI	-	Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services (visa). Japanese: *gijutsu/jinbun chishiki/kokusai gyōmu*
FtM	-	Female to male (trans man)
GCS	-	Gender confirmation surgeries
GID	-	Gender Identity Disorder; Japanese: *seidōitsusei shōgai*
ILGA	-	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
J-ALL	-	Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation. Japanese: *LGBT hōrengōkai*
LDP	-	Liberal Democratic Party. Japanese: *Jiyū minshutō*
LGBT(I)	-	Lesbian, gay, bi, trans, (intersex)
MEXT	-	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology
MHLW	-	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
MtF	-	Male to female (trans woman)
PDA	-	Public displays of affection (e.g., kissing, holding hands, etc.)
RENGO	-	Japanese Trade Union Confederation. Japanese: *Nihon rōdōkumiai sōrengōkai*
SOGI	-	Sexual orientation and gender identity. Japanese: *soji*
SRS	-	Sex reassignment surgery; Japanese: *seibetsu tekigō shujutsu*

List of key words

ALLY: A (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community (Stonewall, n.d.). Japanese: *arai*; *dōmeisha* (Kimura et al., 2021).

ASEXUAL: An umbrella term, or a stand-alone identifier, for someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction(Mardell, 2016). Japanese: *asekusuaru*; *museiaisha* (Kimura et al., 2021).

BI(SEXUAL): When a person is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of more than one gender (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *bai*(*sekushuaru*); *ryōseiaisha* (Arai, 2016).

CIS(GENDER): A person whose gender identity is the same as their sex and/or gender assigned at birth (i.e., cis man; cis woman; Mardell, 2016). The Latin-derived prefix "cis" means "on this side of"; i.e., the opposite of "trans", meaning "across from" or "on the other side of". Japanese: *shisu*(*jendā*) (Kimura et al., 2021).

COMING OUT: When a person first tells someone/others about their orientation and/or gender identity (Stonewall, n.d.). Japanese: *kamingu auto* (Teshima et al., 2021)

DIFFERENT-SEX RELATIONSHIP: A relationship containing people of two different sexes. This term is preferred instead of opposite-sex, as "opposite" is based on the incorrect assumption that there are only two possible sexes and that they are immutable (ILGA Europe, 2015).

ERASURE: When an identity is given insufficient representation, made invisible, or its existence is invalidated (Mardell, 2016).

GAY: A man who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men. Gay is sometimes also used as a blanket term to cover lesbian women and bisexual people as well as gay men (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *gei*; *danseidōseiaisha* (Kimura et al., 2021).

GENDER DYSPHORIA: Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity (Stonewall, n.d.).This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth. In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), and elsewhere, “gender dysphoria” replaces the term “gender identity disorder”, in an effort to remove the stigma in the diagnostic label; it removes the connotation that the person is “disordered” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Japanese: *seibetsuiwa* (Yakushi et al., 2016).

GENDER EXPRESSION: Refers to people's manifestation of their gender identity. Typically, people seek to make their gender expression or presentation match their gender identity/identities, irrespective of the sex that they were assigned at birth (ILGA Europe, 2015. Japanese: *seihyōgen* (Teshima et al., 2021).

GENDER IDENTITY: Refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *seijinin* (Teshima et al., 2021).

GENDER IDENTITY DISORDER: In the context of Japan, gender identity disorder (GID) describes the psychiatric diagnosis required to access sex reassignment surgery (SRS; Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology, 2018). Trans individuals in Japan may identify as GID (see Dale, 2018). Elsewhere in the world, GID has been removed as a diagnostic label (see “Gender dysphoria”).

GOING STEALTH: See “Passing”.

HETERONORMATIVITY: Refers cultural and social practices where men and women are led to believe that heterosexuality is the only conceivable sexuality. It implies that heterosexuality is the only way of being “normal” (ILGA Europe, 2015).

HETEROSEXUAL: Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women or to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men (Stonewall, n.d.). Japanese: *heterosekushuaru*; *iseiaisha* (Kimura et al., 2021).

HOMOPHOBIA: The fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bi people. Homophobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bi (Stonewall, n.d.; also “biphobia” when directed toward people who are bi).

HOMOSEXUAL: People are classified as homosexual on the basis of their gender and the gender of their sexual partner(s). When the partner's gender is the same as the individual's, then the person is categorised as homosexual. It is recommended to use the terms lesbian and gay men instead of homosexual people. The terms lesbian and gay are considered neutral and positive, and the focus is on the identity instead of being sexualised or pathologised (ILGA, 2015). Japanese: *dōseiaisha*.

INTERSEX: A term that relates to a range of physical traits or variations that lie between stereotypical ideals of male and female. Otherwise referred to as Differences of Sex Development (DSD). Intersex people are born with physical, hormonal or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male; or a combination of female and male; or neither female nor male. Many forms of intersex exist; it is a spectrum or umbrella term, rather than a single category (ILGA Europe, 2015). Being intersex relates to biological sex characteristics and is distinct from a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. An intersex person may be straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or asexual, etc., and may identify as female, male, both or neither. Japanese: *intāsekkusu*; *seibunkashikkan* (Arai, 2016)

LESBIAN: A woman who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to women (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *rezubian*; *joseidōseiaisha* (Kimura et al., 2021).

MARRIAGE EQUALITY: Where national marriage legislation also includes same-sex couples – e.g., gender neutral reference to the spouses. Sometimes media outlets and decision makers incorrectly refer to the extension of existing marriage legislation to same-sex couples as "gay marriage". What they really mean is marriage equality; no country has created a marriage law specifically for same-sex couples (ILGA Europe, 2015).

OUTING: When a lesbian, gay, bi or trans [etc.] person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent (Stonewall, n.d.). Japanese : *autingu*; *bakuro* (Teshima et al., 2021).

PANSEXUAL: A person who is capable of being attracted to any or all genders (Mardell, 2016). Japanese: *pansekushuaru*; *zenseiaisha* (Arai, 2016).

PASSING: For LGBT+ people, a strategy of non-disclosure, or otherwise an erasure of LGBT+ identity. In other words, the LGBT+ person "passes" as straight and/or cisgender (see generally, Leary, 1999). For trans people specifically, this may be referred to as "going stealth" (Davis, 2009).

POLICING: The imposition of norms, or personal beliefs, by way of telling others how they should, or should not, identify, behave, or express themselves (Mardell, 2016).

PRIVILEGE: Benefits and opportunities automatically afforded to majorities or non-oppressed groups of people, that are usually unnoticed or taken for granted and occur at the expense of oppressed groups of people (Mardell, 2016). Japanese: *tokken*.

QUEER: Has become an academic term that is inclusive of people who are not heterosexual - includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people. Queer theory is challenging heteronormative social norms concerning gender and sexuality, and claims that gender roles are social constructions. Traditionally the term "queer" was an abusive term and therefore for some still has negative connotations. Many LGBTI persons however have reclaimed the term as a symbol of pride (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *kuia* (Moriyama, 2017).

QUESTIONING: Being unsure of one's sexual/romantic orientation or gender identity (Mardell, 2016). Japanese: *kuesuchoningu* (Teshima et al., 2021).

SEX: A socially constructed classification system based on a person's biology. Society typically recognises only two sex categories, namely "male" and "female", each with specific biological requirements (Mardell, 2016). Sometimes the terms "sex" and "gender" are used interchangeably. Japanese: *seibutsugakutekisei* (Teshima et al., 2021).

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: Refers to each person's capacity for profound affection, emotional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender (ILGA Europe, 2015). Japanese: *seiteki shikō* (Teshima et al., 2021).

STRAIGHT: See "Heterosexual".

TRANS(GENDER): An umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not match their sex and/or gender assigned at birth (Mardell, 2016). Transgender people may be male-to-female (see "Trans woman") or female-to-male (see "Trans man"). Trans people may also experience gender(s) outside the male/female binary (e.g., genderfluid, genderqueer, non-binary, x-gender, etc.). Transgender people may be heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual, etc. Japanese: *toransu*(*jendā*) (Kimura et al., 2021).

TRANS MAN: A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male (Stonewall, n.d.).

TRANS WOMAN: A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female (Stonewall, n.d.).

TRANSITIONING: The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents (Stonewall, n.d.).

TRANSPHOBIA: The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans (Stonewall, n.d.).

X GENDER: Although its meanings are multiple and contested, in Japan x-gender is generally understood to refer to a gender identity that is neither female nor male, or otherwise non-binary, (Dale, 2014, 2019). Abbreviations such as FtX, MtX, and XtX may be used self-referentially. Japanese: *x jendā*; *chūsei*; *ryōsei*; *musei*; *futeisei* (Kimura et al., 2021).

Notes on translation and language conventions

- Except when referencing authors writing in English, when referring to people who are Japanese, their family name will be written first; hence Utada (family name) Hikaru (given name).
- Unless appearing in a direct quote, the spelling of English language words throughout this text will follow Australian English spelling conventions.
- Japanese words in this thesis have been transliterated using Modified Hepburn Romanisation. With the exception of place names, and in cases where the word has fallen into common usage in Australian English (e.g., samurai, manga), Japanese words are italicised throughout.
- In academic writing it is standard practice to deploy "he" and "she" (and their derivative forms), or the phrase "he or she", when referring to a generic person. In this thesis the singular third-person pronoun "they" ("their") will substitute as a gender-neutral alternative. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Editio*n (2020) endorses the usage of the singular "they". Incidentally, the APA style is used here as a guideline for in-text citations and the references section formatting.
- Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of referenced material in the Japanese language are the author's. Although all interviews were conducted in English, most of the respondents used at least some Japanese. Larger sections of translated text will appear between asterisks (i.e., *). It was important to preserve interviewee voice, especially when they used key terms or words that are not easily translatable. In these cases, the original Japanese will immediately follow the English in parentheses.
- Finally, it is important to note that the quotes of research participants appearing in this thesis were sometimes edited for readability. Excessive speech disfluencies, including non-lexical utterances (e.g., "like" and "um") and false starts, were removed. Where deemed necessary for the sake of clarity, corrections to word tense and word usage appear in square parentheses (e.g., "do" becomes "[did]"). Omissions are noted with ellipses (i.e., …).

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Situating the study

1.1.1 Diversity is an inevitable reality

The shifting composition of the working-age population[1]cannot be ignored. The concept of the second demographic transition, formulated by demographers Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa in 1986, describes the seemingly worldwide trend of "sustained sub-replacement fertility, a multitude of living arrangements other than marriage, the disconnection between marriage and procreation, and no stationary population" (Lesthaeghe, 2010, p. 211). In Japan, the total fertility rate was 1.43 and the proportion of the elderly (aged 65 years and over) was 27.6% in 2017 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research [IPSS], 2019). The proportion of never-married people who do not intend to marry continues to rise as does the average age of first marriage (IPSS, 2017a). In a slight deviation from typical expression of the second demographic transition, although studies have demonstrated an increase in the prevalence of cohabitation (e.g. Tsuya, 2006), it is argued not to be an alternative to marriage, but rather a precursor (Raymo et al., 2009; Raymo et al., 2015). Meanwhile, women's labour force participation rate[2] increased to 52.5%, and made up 44.1% of the total labour force in 2018 (Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare [MHLW], 2019). Lesthaeghe (2014) expects that while population sizes may be stabilised by mass immigration, this outcome would still involve the further growth of multicultural societies. According to the MHLW (2021b), 1,724,328 foreign workers were employed in 267,243 firms in 2020, with the largest proportion (35.8%) working in firms with less than 30 employees. Additionally, Korekawa (2018) predicts that by 2065, the combined number of foreign population, naturalised population, and population of *kokusaiji* ("international children") will reach 10,756,724 people, accounting for 12% of the total population of Japan.[3] Diversity is an inevitable reality for organisations of all sizes.

In today's global, hyper-competitive labour market, companies cannot afford to discriminate against potential talent based on dimensions of diversity. According to a survey by Chuo University and Persol Research and Consulting, Japan will face a shortage of 6.44 million workers by 2030, spurring the government to promote the hiring of older people, women, and foreign workers ("Japan gov't to urge firms", 2019). Demographic diversity refers to a mix of people from broad social categories comprising both visible traits (e.g., age, ethnicity), and nonvisible traits (e.g., education, religion; see Tsui & Gutek, 1999). Regarded variously as "invisible diversity" (e.g., Ward, 2008), and "invisible minorities" (Bell et al., 2011; Priola et al., 2014), LGBT+ individuals belong to a social group that in many parts of the world faces discrimination, persecution, and the systematic denial of pursuing a dignified and authentic life. Dicklitch-Nelson et al. (2019) argue that sexual minorities are the most vulnerable minorities on the planet. They represent the epitome of individualism, and are often perceived to be a threat to the collective, and to the very health of a society. Deviating from societal norms can come at a heavy cost, in some cases invoking harsh punishments that are not only built into social systems, but also codified in law. According to the most recent *State-sponsored Homophobia* report compiled by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (Mendos et al., 2020), consensual same-sex sexual conduct is criminalised 67 UN Member States, and in six UN Member States the prescribed punishment for consensual same-sex sexual acts is the death penalty.

Recently, expressing support for sexual diversity has been seen as a marker which can distinguish between more and less progressive societies, as Mackie (2017) notes. Applying this criterion, it can be said that Japan has some catching up to do. Using the Global Barometer of Gay Rights, which measures the extent to which a country protects or represses sexual minorities, Dicklitch-Nelson et al. (2019) score Japan a “D” or “intolerant”, ranking it 48th out of 188 countries. While there are no laws in Japan persecuting LGBT+ individuals, equally there are no laws protecting them.[4] Importantly for this research, Japan is the only G7 country in which employees are not protected from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace (see appendix A). LGBT+ individuals in Japan may face difficulties applying for jobs, verbal or physical abuse in the workplace, denial of opportunities for promotion, or outright dismissal. For example, The *Survey of LGBT Issues in the Workplace Environment* (Nijiiro Diversity: Center for Gender Studies, 2016) found that 44 per cent of LGB+ and 70 per cent of trans participants surveyed had experienced sexuality- or gender-related difficulty during the job application process, compared with just 6 per cent of the non-LGBT+ participants. The survey also found that trans individuals were more likely to be employed on a part-time basis, more likely to have a blue collar job, and as a result more likely to be in a lower annual income bracket than their LGB+ and non-LGBT+ counterparts. Lacking anti-discrimination laws, corporations operating in Japan play a proactive role in determining the level of inclusion that LGBT+ individuals experience in the workplace. By documenting and analysing these experiences, an understanding of just how much corporations in Japan have embraced diversity can be established.

People are increasingly seeking job opportunities abroad independent of companies. According to Finnacord (2018), globally, the number of expatriates amounted to about 66 million in 2017, with the largest share comprising so-called “individual workers”, and the smallest, corporate transferees. Further, based on a survey of 18,135 expatriates, 21 per cent of the sample found a job, started a business, or were recruited locally (the "Go-Getter"), while only 10 per cent of the sample were sent to work abroad by their existing employer (the "Foreign Assignee"; InterNations, 2018).[5] Distinct from company-assigned expatriates (AEs), self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) initiate the expatriation process, stay in the host country for an often-not-predetermined period, may or may not have support from their employer, and may or may not intend to repatriate (Andresen et al., 2014; see also Tharenou, 2013). For many, Japan represents a potential host country for expatriation. Behind Canada, Japan was ranked the second most desired destination for people wanting to move overseas based on an analysis of search data in 2020 by Remitly (n.d.), a global money transfer service. It was top choice for people in 13 countries and regions including Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and the United States. There have been studies of expatriate experiences in Japan, notably the work of Peltokorpi (2008; with Froese, 2009, 2012). In a survey of 179 expatriates, Peltokorpi and Froese (2009) found that SIEs were better adjusted to general aspects of the host country (e.g., housing, food) and interactions with host country nationals than AEs. However, a particular intersection of diversity that warrants further investigation is that of expatriates who identify as LGBT+. They take on the unique challenge of managing both visible (e.g., name, physical appearance) and nonvisible (sexuality, gender) diversity. How they navigate dual or triple memberships in nondominant social groups is complex. Management needs to be aware of this diversity within diversity.

1.1.2 Systems of privilege and oppression

The research to follow is based on the premise that workplace diversity is here to stay, and that workplaces, regardless of size, are becoming increasingly diverse. Typically, the term "diversity" is used in reference to nondominant groups, and diversity management, to varying degrees and success, serves as a vehicle for remediation, as well as a way to add value through difference. For example, diversity policies and initiatives are developed in relation to people living with disabilities, women, and migrant workers. These historically underrepresented groups continue to face *organisational inequalities*, defined by Acker (2006) as:

> systematic disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes; workplace decisions such as how to organize work; opportunities for promotion and interesting work; security in employment and benefits; pay and other monetary rewards; respect; and pleasures in work and work relations. (p.443)

In research and in practice, difference tends to be conceptualised by focusing only on nondominant groups, referring to how individuals or groups vary from, or compare to, the unspoken norm of the dominant groups (Allen, 2010). Agócs and Burr (1996) observe that: "The singling out of "diversity" as an issue, and the implication that it must be "managed", may communicate the message that diversity—not inequality—is the problem that organizations need to address" (p. 38). And as Ely (1995) puts it: "Only people of color have a race; only women have a gender; only gay, lesbian, and bisexual people have a sexual identity" (p. 162). Put another way, those in the dominant groups embody the normative, "neutral" subject position, and diversity refers to those with membership in nondominant groups, the "Other",[6] whose presence and differences require special understanding and treatment.

This then becomes an issue not of diversity, but of power relations. Members of dominant groups continue to maintain positions of leadership and influence while members from nondominant groups, although seeing an increase in numerical representation in the workplace, are still mostly relegated to low level positions. As a concrete example, in spite of the aforementioned increased labour participation of women, the proportion of female board of directors in Japan was 5.2% in 2019 (Gender Equity Bureau Cabinet Office, 2020b),[7] and only 15% of senior and leadership positions were held by women (World Economic Forum, 2020). In the discussion of why this inequality persists it is important to examine systems of privilege and oppression. Mizuki, one of the interviewees from Study 1, spoke about her experience as a teaching assistant (TA) for a professor of minority studies at her university, one of the highest ranking in Japan. A survey about *tokken* (privilege) was distributed to a class of about 200 undergraduate students. Of the class, less than 50% knew the word, and when asked to give examples of privilege, most pointed to economic privilege. Mizuki was surprised and angered by this result, lamenting the fact that many of the students were completely unaware of the privileges that were afforded to them. Viewed through a feminist theory lens, *privilege* refers to the systematic dominance conferred to certain social groups, imbuing them with an unearned advantage (McIntosh, 1988/1992). Likewise, *oppression*, for the purpose of this research, can be thought of as the systematic subordination of certain social groups, subjecting them to undeserved disadvantage. Of privilege, McIntosh (2012) states:

> Many people who think they are writing about privilege are in fact writing about deficits, barriers, and discrimination, and cannot yet see exemptions, assumptions, and permissions granted by privilege. I am convinced that studies of oppression will not go anywhere toward

> ending oppression unless they are accompanied by understanding of the systems of privilege that cause systems of oppression. (p. 204)

As in Mizuki's story, McIntosh (2012) frames privilege as misunderstood or completely overlooked, in comparison to oppression, which is seen as more tangible and easy to recognise. Rather than parsing privilege and oppression into separate systems, here privilege and oppression will be conceptualised as two sides of the same coin. That is, the same systems that grant privileges to some simultaneously oppress others. Moreover, individuals can experience both privilege *and* oppression to varying degrees. These systems are propped up and maintained by the dissemination of dominant ideologies. Two dominant ideologies that are of particular relevance to the current research, namely heteronormativity and *tan'itsu minzoku shakai* ("monoethnic society"), are introduced below.

Put simply, *heteronormativity*, a term which emerged out of queer theory in the 1990s (see Warner, 1993), is an ideology that positions heterosexuality as the normative mode within which people relate to themselves and to one another. Queen et al. (2004) elaborate:

> As a term, heteronormativity describes the processes through which social institutions and social policies reinforce the belief that human beings fall into two distinct sex/gender categories: male/man and female/woman. This belief (or ideology) produces a correlative belief that those two sexes/genders exist in order to fulfil complementary roles, i.e., that all intimate relationships ought to exist only between males/men and females/women. (p. 3)

Conceptually similar, Rich's (1980) *compulsory heterosexuality* and Butler's (1990/2006) *heterosexual matrix* also describe this dominant logic: a stable sex is expressed through a stable gender, and desire for the opposite sex naturally follows. Heterosexuality is axiomatic, only made visible in relation to the sexual Other. As Halperin (1995) puts it, "heterosexuality defines itself implicitly by constituting itself as the negation of homosexuality … heterosexuality, then, *depends* on homosexuality to lend it substance—and to enable it to acquire *by* default its status as a default, as a *lack of difference* or an *absence of abnormality*" (p. 44; emphasis in original). Similarly, Ahmed (2006) comments on the fact that homosexuality and heterosexuality are not positioned in a relation of equivalence with the emergence of the term "sexual orientation"; the homosexual is constituted as having the "orientation" while the heterosexual is presumed neutral (see also Burrell, 1987). Like heteronormativity, the term *cisnormativity* describes the pervasive assumption that "those assigned male at birth always grow up to be men and those assigned female at birth always grow up to be women" (Bauer et al., 2009, p. 356). Because organisations have historically been analysed and characterised as asexual and agendered (Burrell, 1984; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Wilson, 1996), researching LGBT+ sexualities and genders can be useful in revealing the underlying power structures that privilege people who are heterosexual and cisgender.[8] By recognising that "sexuality [and gender are] constituted in society and history, not biologically ordained" (Foucault, 1984/1985, p. 149), normative modes of organising and relating that are assumed to be "natural" can begin to be questioned and disrupted. Importantly, it is not that heteronormativity and cisnormativity are forcefully and relentlessly imposed on the non-dominant LGBT+ group by members of the dominant "straight" group; however, it can sometimes feel that way to individuals who are at odds with such ideologies. Rather, heteronormativity and cisnormativity are imbued in systems, as well as bodies of knowledge, that LGBT+ people themselves participate in and reinforce. For many of the LGBT+ participants in the current study, success and social acceptance were discursively tied to heterosexual and cisgender ideals of marriage and children, as well as to the achievement and maintenance of a stable gender expression that fits within the male/female binary.

Meanwhile, *tan'itsu minzoku shakai*, the hegemonic discourse of Japan as a monoethnic society, as Oguma (1995) argues, took root in the aftermath of World War II in response to the loss of Japanese colonies. In contrast, pre-war era Japan was organised and recognised as a multicultural empire.[9] In the post-war era, *nihonjinron* ("theories of Japaneseness") proliferated, with Nomura Research Institute (1978) compiling a list of 700 *nihonjinron* titles published between 1945 and 1978.[10] The assumption of ethnic homogeneity inherent in *nihonjinron*, as well the methodological flaws apparent in the arguments, have been widely criticised (see, for example, Kawamura, 1982; Dale 1986; Befu, 1987; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1986). Despite there being empirical evidence to the contrary, state actors, including former prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro (Chira, 1986), have continued to feed into the discourse of homogeneity (Burgess, 2007).[11] Moreover, and perhaps more insidiously, *tan'itsu minzoku shakai* is reproduced in academic knowledge production, including in management and organisation studies. For example, in a chapter of *Routledge handbook of human resource management in Asia* (Eds. Cooke & Kim), Froese et al. (2018) open a paragraph with "Japan is a mono-cultural, mono-racial, and mono-lingual country" (p. 277) before proceeding to draw on theories of well-known *nihonjinron* scholars Doi Takeo and Nakane Chie in order to characterise (and essentialise) Japanese people in the context of organisational culture. As well as denying the genealogies, cultures, and languages of the extant Ainu[12] and Ryūkyū Island peoples[13] (Takahashi, 2020; Winchester, 2020), this ideology draws a sharp divide between those who are deemed *kokumin* ("Japanese"), and those who are seen as *gaikokujin* ("foreigner"); a dichotomy that regulates people both socially and legally. Even those who are legally designated Japanese, including individuals who are of mixed heritage, sometimes referred to as *hāfu* (half), and *kikokushijo* ("returnees"—individuals with Japanese nationality that were raised overseas), face exclusionary attitudes and structural inequalities in their daily lives. Strict social sanctions dictate what it means to be a "real" Japanese person. As with heteronormativity, everyone, including foreigners, participate in perpetuating "common sense" ideas of Japanese uniqueness and ethnic homogeneity. Shiobara (2020) theorises that in a *bundan shakai* (divided society) where vulnerability is ubiquitous, because the citizenship of minorities is institutionally mis-/non-recognised, depictions of them as "immoral others" are legitimised, resulting in exclusionism against minorities and the uneven distribution of vulnerability. Further, despite a recent movement in Japan to promote *tabunka kyōsei* ("multicultural coexistence"), Kawabata and Yamamoto (2020) contend that a viewpoint of economic rationality determines the limits of "acceptable" diversity. In other words, diversity is only seen as viable if it garners monetary benefits. Drawing on the experiences of the participants, the mindset of valuing diversity conditionally is explored in this research.

From the above, it can be understood that dominant ideologies tend to exhibit binary and hierarchical matrices: heterosexuality/homosexuality; Japanese/foreigner. Crucially, they often operate beneath conscious awareness and are therefore taken for granted and considered universally valid. In actuality, they are social constructs that are culturally and historically dependent. It is important to note that, while these dominant ideologies shape and constrain the attitudes and behaviours of everyone in a given society, members of nondominant groups tend to be more negatively affected than members of dominant groups (Allen, 2010). How these ideologies manifest in social institutions such as family and education (re)enforce what is deemed "normal", designating some subjectivities as intelligible and others untenable. Here, "subjectivity" refers to the historical, political and social possibilities of existence (Braidotti, 1993). Meanwhile, "intelligibility" can be understood as the "organizing mechanism through which we perceive one another as viable, social beings" (Tyler, 2020, p. 8). Viewed through a Butlerian lens, in everyday interactions, this is achieved primarily through reiterative acts that continually evoke subject position (i.e., *performativity*; Butler, 1990/2006). Power relations are communicated through language, discursive practices—that is, in a Foucauldian sense, practices of knowledge formation (i.e., "discourse"; Bacchi & Bonham, 2014)—and physical appearance (Allen, 2010). Positioning the body at the centre of power relations, Foucault's (1976/1978) notion of *biopower* describes how people voluntarily control themselves through daily self-monitoring and self-disciplinary techniques in order to conform to social norms and values—that is, to appear "normal" (Pylypa, 1998; Githens, 2009; Barker & Scheele, 2016). Taken together, it can be understood that individuals are both a product of society and are actively *producing* their social identities.

1.1.3 An intersectional approach to workplace diversity

In theory, examining how dominant ideologies regulate power relations and perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression can be useful in understanding workplace inequalities. In reality, how these power relations are reinforced or resisted by individuals is much more complex. Individuals are made up of a constellation of varied, sometimes contradictory, identities, and, depending on the context, belong to or are perceived to belong to a variety of social groups. Similarly, social groups are not homogeneous monoliths. Yet, too often they are treated as such. As McCormack and Kawabata (2020) observe, “just as past fantasies of homogeneous Japan made the problematic assumption that all Japanese were pretty much the same, minority studies, too, may indulge in the fantasy that all minority group members are pretty much the same” (p. 27). It is important for this current research to move beyond unidimensional understandings of individual people within the LGBT+ community[14] living and working in Japan. Thus far, this text has categorised people as belonging to either nondominant groups *or* dominant groups. This feeds into an assumption that nondominant groups are made up of the same people and that every member of a nondominant group is equally oppressed, and that, likewise, every member of a dominant group is the same and is equally privileged. In Japan, someone who identifies as gay may be constituted as belonging to a nondominant group. At the same time, they are also a Japanese cisgender man, apparently belonging to a dominant group. Does the gay man have access to the same privileges that his heterosexual counterparts enjoy? Likewise, is the gay man subjected to the same level of oppression that a trans man faces? What if the gay man was physically disabled? As Shiobara (2020) aptly surmises: “There is no person who is “essentially” and unchangeably minority/majority, but people are located in a position of minority/majority depending on the situation, while the degree of minority-/majority-ness they have affects their movability from the position” (p. 10). Therefore, even though activists or policymakers may find it useful, stating categorically that LGBT+ (sexual minorities) are an oppressed group provides an incomplete picture of the realities of those people. Instead, it is vital that one considers the lives of LGBT+ individuals intersectionally, to understand the varying degrees of oppression *and* privilege they are subjected to *and* imbued with based on a complex interplay of multiple diversity categories as well as context.

As in the title, the concept of intersectionality serves as a theoretical lens through which to examine workplace diversity. The term “intersectionality” was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw

(1989), a professor of law, and refers to the interaction between multiple categories of difference and, critically, the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davis, 2008). Crenshaw (1989, 1991) showed how the experiences of Black[15] women in the United States were erased in the conceptualisation, identification, and remediation of race and sex discrimination when only focusing on a single identity category. Intersectionality marks a significant paradigm shift in the way diversity is considered and recognised, and its application is manifold. However, research on diversity management practice in organisations has hitherto neglected the role of intersectionality (Holvino, 2010; Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012; Dennissen et al., 2020). Beyond recognising that the pool of current and future employees is becoming more diverse, companies must also acknowledge the ways in which diversity is represented by those employees, as well as the complex interplay between categories of diversity. However, this should not be a practice in merely adding together these categories in an attempt to understand an individual's lived experience; proponents of intersectionality caution against this (Crenshaw et al., 1995; McCall, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006). In her argument against the so-called "triple oppression" approach of analysing the oppression of people who are "Black", "women" and "working-class", Yuval-Davis (2006) explains that:

> Any attempt to essentialize "Blackness" or "womanhood" or "working classness" as specific forms of concrete oppression in additive ways inevitably conflates narratives of identity politics with descriptions of positionality as well as constructing identities within the terms of specific political projects (p. 195).

Instead, intersectionality research should focus on the ways that multiple factors uniquely combine to define an individual's experience (Bowleg, 2008). For example, identifying as lesbian and being a returnee confers a unique experience, above and beyond being a returnee or a self-identified lesbian.

Since one of the researcher's aims was to add to the diversity management scholarship, extant research was useful in guiding the direction the inquiry took. Alcázar et al. (2013) stress the necessity of analysing and clearly defining the kinds of differences that the organisation needs to manage, paying particular attention to the "simultaneity" (Holvino, 2010) of different diversity categories. Holvino's *model of simultaneity* (2012) proposes that dimensions of difference are "simultaneous processes of identity, institutional and social practice" (p. 262). Meanwhile, rather than adopting prescribed diversity categories such as "disability" and "age", Tatli and Özbilgin (2012) propose an *emic approach* in which the historical and geographical background of the site of study reveal the social categories "creating and sustaining privilege and disadvantage in the specific context"(p. 191). For example, drawing on the *social relations framework* developed by

Anthias (2012, 2013a), Ressia et al. (2017) studied the lived experiences of skilled migrant jobseekers in the context of the Australian labour market. Their research revealed social divisions of "ethnicity", "new migrant status", and "gender", as well as distinct sub-categories of women based on family responsibilities. Finally, Rodriguez et al. (2016) suggest three ways research of intersectionality in organisations can be extended and enriched:

1. Move from static representations of dominance and oppression to explicitly include the interplay of advantage and disadvantage implicit in intersectional analysis;
2. Move from a solely subjectivity-identity centred approach to one that encompasses the interplay of subjectivities, micro-level encounters, structures and institutional arrangement; and
3. Move beyond the favoured triumvirate of gender, race and class to build a more complex ontology of intersecting categories of difference.

With the above in mind, rather than constructing the category of "LGBT+" as a single, homogeneous group in the context of the workplace that is always seen as disadvantaged and in need of special treatment, this research shows how a mixture of privilege and oppression shaped the participants' day-to-day micro interactions, as well as their positionality vis-à-vis social institutions. To this end, three cohorts constituted the crux of the qualitative inquiry. Specifically, the experiences of Japanese LGBT+ individuals and LGBT+ expatriate individuals were shown to be distinct. Similarly, the experiences of LGBT+ expatriate individuals and LGBT+ expatriate couples were found to be divergent, revealing the heterogeneity of the category of "expatriate". Beyond their LGBT+ identity, it was found that positionality within the social categories of *age*, *social gender*, *nationality*, and *marital status* were significant in revealing the dominant ideologies embedded in social institutions. Importantly, these social categories were not chosen arbitrarily or by design. Instead, in line with the emic approach suggested by Tatli and Özbilgin (2012), the social categories came directly out of the analysis of the data, taking into consideration the specific context they were collected in. By developing an intersectional understanding of workplace diversity, companies in Japan can make more nuanced decisions about their practices and policies, from the hiring process through performance appraisal. In this way, they can become more inclusive of diverse local and global talent.

1.2 Overview of the paper

1.2.1 Key terminology

At this point it is important to introduce terminology that is specific to the research and used frequently in this text. Throughout the interview process, the issue of labels and categorisation entered discussion. Labels can connect us, allow us to articulate who we are succinctly, and help us to construct reality. At the same time, labels can be a site of confusion and misuse—oftentimes we do not choose our own labels, but are instead assigned them—and they can come laden with values and expectations that constrain and reinforce stereotypes. This presents a paradox, as Mizuki acknowledged:

> We should all call ourselves queer; period … Let's throw away the idea of gender and sexuality and just call ourselves queer. I think that will be the goal of humanity. But then, [until] you get there, you have to actually present [to] society that these people exist, these *other people* exist, and you have to label them, for legitimizing their existence. And it's such a paradox.

As Kong et al. (2003) explain, research of the "homosexual" is rooted in a form of positivism that rendered researchers as "subjects of knowing", and research participants as "objects of study"; the Other. Historically, research methods were used as instruments of pathological diagnosis to malign LGBT+ subjects as abnormal and sick, often leading to the incarceration, "treatment", or murder of these individuals. The legacy of essentialist notions of sexuality and gender in research epistemologies endures. Rumen (2018) posits that "we have yet to develop a satisfactory lexicon that allows us to [discuss sexualities and genders in a way] that avoids reproducing the essentialisms that underpin the categories of sexuality and gender we strive to undo" (p. 11). Unfortunately, in order to talk about groups of people in meaningful ways, especially when making comparisons, as is the case with this research, some sort of categorisation system is necessary. Here, a balancing act between practicality and inclusivity ensues.

In Japan, the acronym "LGBT" has gained traction in the media, as well as in academia and the business community, used alongside and in some cases supplanting terms like *seiteki mainoriti* (sexual minority; less commonly *seitekishosūsha*; see, for example, Yanagisawa et al., 2016).[16] Indeed, numerous books published in Japan in the last decade, many of which will be referred to this text, have "LGBT" in their title. LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bi, and trans. "LGBTI", the "I" standing for intersex,[17] is also beginning to appear in diversity and inclusion rhetoric in business (e.g., Businesses for Social Responsibility), as well as in government agencies and supernational organisations (e.g., Australian Human Rights Commission; United Nations). Despite their simplicity and seeming inclusiveness, the main issue with using acronyms such as LGBT(I), as explicated by

Table 1.1 Manifestations of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation

Dimension of diversity	**Manifestations**
Sex	Woman—intersex/inter*—man
Gender identity	Transgender/transsexual/trans*—cisgender/cis*
Gender expression	Feminine—androgyne/fluid—masculine
Sexual orientation	Homosexual—bisexual/*sexual—heterosexual

Adapted from Köllen, 2016, p. 17

Köllen (2016), is that they lump together more or less unrelated phenomena, with "LGB", referring to sexual orientation, "T" referring to gender identity, and "I" referring to (biological) sex (i.e., chromosomes, gonads and genitals). In other words, who a person is attracted to is separate from their gender as well as their sex. For example, a trans man can identify as bisexual. Köllen (2016) goes on to disambiguate the terms *sexuality*, *sex*, and *gender*, noting that "sex" and "gender" are often used interchangeably in English.[18] His integrative diversity management approach on sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation is helpful in depicting these phenomena as separate dimensions of diversity (see table 1.1). This conceptualisation also breaks away from binary constructions, recognising that people can fall on a spectrum of experience. Finally, and importantly, it creates space for people who are cisgender and heterosexual (cis-het) to be included in the diversity discourse.

A notable omission from this approach is *gender expression*, which refers to the external "manifestation of one's gender" (Mardell, 2016, 73) beyond internal self-identity. Gender expression is displayed and performed through physical characteristics including secondary sex characteristics, as well as through clothing, language, cosmetics, comportment, voice, name, pronouns, and so forth. In a binary model, men are expected to express masculine traits and women feminine traits. Beyond being used for individual gender expression, masculinities and femininities exist at higher levels of abstraction as archetypes enshrined in specific ideals or seemingly embodied by mythological figures or modern-day celebrities; in other words, the qualities that make a person a "man" or a "woman" depend upon a shared cultural knowledge. Feminist social constructionist Lorber (1994) writes: "In the social construction of gender, it does not matter what men and women actually do; it does not even matter if they do exactly the same thing. The social institution of gender insists only that what they do is *perceived* as different" (p. 26; emphasis in original). Meanwhile, Fogarty and Zheng (2018) note the societal norm of glorifying hypermasculine men and hyperfeminine women despite the fact that most people fail to meet these prototypical definitions. In this way, it can be understood that gender does not pre-exist in individuals, although the construction and maintenance of gender manifest in personal identities and in social interactions. When we recognise that gender is a social construct, we can begin to undo the sex/gender split. Gender expression exists on a spectrum, it can change over time and depending on context, and it is something that everyone participates in whether they are conscious of it or not. In practical terms, people perform their gender through daily reiterative practices (Butler, 1990/2006). Mardell (2016) observes that there may be complex and varied reasons people decide to express their gender in certain ways: safety; dress code; parental pressure; religion; culture; wanting to be taken seriously. People, regardless of sex, gender, or sexuality, can embody masculinities and femininities. Some people want to express themselves as more feminine, some more masculine, and some androgynous. Furthermore, rather than having a stable gender expression across time, some people are *fluid* in their expression. Although in many people gender expression may be congruent with their gender identity, it is arguably more productive to study and understand gender expression as a distinct phenomenon.

Masculinities and femininities are plural and are culturally and historically prescribed (Paechter, 2003; Budgeon, 2014). They do not exist independent of each other, however, and must be understood relationally (Schippers, 2007). As such, within particular socio-historical contexts, some masculinities and femininities are deemed more acceptable than others. The concept of *hegemony*, as defined by Gramsci (1971), refers to "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" (p. 12). As alluded to in section 1.1.2, in many contemporary societies power is maintained through consent, rather than through coercion. Artz and Murphy (2000) explain that subordinate groups willingly participate in reproducing hegemonic relations because they perceive some tangible benefit. However, consent to domination is not absolute, and acts of resistance, which seek to undermine or overthrow hegemony (Allen, 2010), are a part of the power dynamic. Drawing on the concept of hegemony, typologies that reveal the power relations between women and men, as well as between femininities and masculinities, have been elucidated. Specifically, *hegemonic masculinity*, as conceptualised by Connell (1987, 1995), can be understood as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of the patriarchy, which guarantee (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 1995, p. 77).[19] Along with historical and geographical mobility, dominance over other masculinities, as well as over femininities is the defining feature of hegemonic masculinity. In other words, hegemonic masculinity is reformulated over time and space in order to maintain its position in the hierarchy. Nonhegemonic masculinities, on the other hand, include those that are trivialised, marginalised, or discriminated against (e.g. exhibiting sexual desire for other men). Messerschmidt (2016) further distinguishes hegemonic masculinity from "dominant" (i.e., the most common or celebrated form of masculinity) and "dominating" (i.e., exercising power and control over people and events) masculinities, which may, at times, also be hegemonic, but otherwise fail to be hegemonic if they do not legitimate unequal gender relations. Moreover, "positive" masculinities are those that "contribute to legitimating egalitarian relations between men and women, masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities" (Messerschmidt & Messnar, 2018, p. 42). Meanwhile, Schippers (2007) defines hegemonic femininity[20] as "the characteristics defined as womanly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to hegemonic masculinity and that, by doing so, guarantee the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 94). Crucially, hegemonic femininity reinforces, rather than challenges, the patriarchy[21], and is simultaneously ascendant in relation to all other forms of femininity. These nonhegemonic femininities are referred to as "pariah femininities" by Schnippers (2007) as she suggests they are not seen so much as inferior, but rather as "contaminating" (p. 95) to the relationship between masculinity and femininity. As enacted by women, refusals to complement hegemonic masculinity include exhibiting sexual desire for other women, promiscuous behaviour, sexual inaccessibility, or overtly aggressive behaviour. Pariah femininities, like positive masculinities, challenge gender hegemony and offer alternate modes of relating to one another. Again, femininities are not limited to "women", and masculinities to "men", and trans and gender nonconforming people also participate in embodying or resisting gender hegemony. In chapter 5, hegemonic and nonhegemonic femininities and masculinities in the socio-historical context of Japan are explored.

Taking a leaf out of Rumen's (2018) book, *Queering Business*, the acronym "LGBT+" will be deployed throughout this text to refer to the myriad sexualities and genders that are being lived. Here, the addition of the symbol (+) after LGBT is "to signal the provisionally of these categories and hold open the possibility for including sexual and gender Others who are not represented" (Rumen, 2018, p. 12).[22] When referring to research that, for example, only examines LGB but not T, the LGBT acronym is altered to reflect this. Meanwhile, the acronym SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) will be used in relation to dimensions of diversity: "SOGI diversity" (noun); and "SOGI diverse" (adjective). With its political origins in the AIDS crisis, and its intellectual inspiration in the first volume of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1976), queer theory analyses how heteronormativity structures the meaningfulness of the social world, thereby enforcing a hierarchy between the normal and the deviant or queer (Dean, 2003). As a verb, “to queer” something, or to engage in the process of “queering” (e.g., queering the workplace) means to deconstruct or critique heteronormative frameworks and systems (Warner, 1993; Rumen, 2018). Referencing Tim Dean’s work on being queer, author and Black feminist bell hooks (name intentionally not capitalised)[23] described queer “not as being about who you’re having sex with—that can be a dimension of it—but queer as being about the self that is at odds with everything around it and has to invent and create and find a place to speak and to thrive and to live” (2014). *Kuia* (queer) entered the Japanese lexicon via the import of queer studies in academia in the 1990s (Moriyama, 2017), and there will be instances in this text where LGBT+ and queer are used interchangeably. For example, queer as an umbrella term may also capture (historical) Japanese parlance and practice such as *okama* and *nanshoku*. Most recently, the acronym “LGBTQ”, the “Q” standing for queer, has been deployed by organisations such as Tokyo Rainbow Pride and the Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation, as There is no one, consistent way to collectively group people who are not cisgender and/or heterosexual, and the language surrounding SOGI diversity is evolving and changing all the time. Ultimately, the operation of discursive tags in this thesis to refer to sexual and gender subjects, including the acronym LGBT+ and the noun “heterosexual” (or “straight”), is driven by practicality, and should not be interpreted as an attempt to fix an individual to any specific category.

Another term relevant to the research population and specific to the Japanese context is *tōjisha* (“person [directly] concerned”). Outside of its origins in legal studies, *tōjisha* has been used in the context of anti-discrimination campaigns since the early 1980s to refer to individuals and groups who are the subjects of discrimination, stressing the right of people directly impacted to campaign their own interests (Ishida & Murakami, 2006). In this way, the dissemination of “correct knowledge” is wrested away from authorities—or otherwise *hi-tōjisha* (“non-*tōjisha*”)—and “those directly concerned” position themselves as the “experts” who are most informed about their needs. Despite its broad appeal, McLelland (2009) problematises *tōjisha* in terms of both its ontological (who, exactly, is a *tōjisha*) and epistemic (what is it about *tōjisha* experiences that grounds “correct knowledge”) capacity, concluding that “attempts to restrict who can speak about these issues at a time when they ought instead to be opened up to wider debate seem counterproductive and in need of reconsideration” (p. 20). As it appears in the title, it is also important to clarify what is meant by “workplace”. The participants worked in a variety of organisations across several industries from large MNEs and national firms to small boutique businesses and IT start-ups. Their workplaces were school classrooms and office spaces and newsrooms and art galleries. Some of the participants were self-employed and had no stable place of work. When meeting with colleagues or supervisors or clients in bars, restaurants, or entertainment venues, or even over video chat, these spaces could also constitute the "workplace". In this way, it can be understood that the workplace is not confined to a single space, and that the line that separates work from other spheres of life is often blurred. With this in mind, in this paper, "workplace" will be loosely defined as any space in which: a) work-related tasks are being undertaken with or without compensation; and/or b) the individual is interacting with work-related people. Beyond this definition, the author does not seek to characterise a specific time or space that is used for work. Finally, in this paper an "expatriate" refers to an individual who is currently residing in a country outside their home country for the purpose of employment. This paper specifically focuses on the lived experiences of self-initiated expatriates. In the case of the expatriate couples and families, one partner may be dependent on the other and unemployed, or they may both have or be seeking employment.

1.2.2 Defining the research population

Collecting demographic data at a national level, whether through sampling or census survey methods, has important implications for policy-making. Yet, LGBT+ individuals have traditionally been rendered invisible within national datasets at best, or, at worst, collected data has been (mis)used in a regulatory capacity by law enforcement agencies (European Commission, 2017). In an overview of LGBTI-related data collection in the OECD, Valfort (2017) observes that a minority of countries have included direct questions on the sexual orientation of the respondent in population-based surveys, noting that these surveys are usually conducted in relation to health and sexual practices. It was found that English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, Ireland, New-Zealand, UK, the U.S.) and Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), as well as in Chile, Estonia, France, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland had included questions on sexual orientation, and only the U.S. and Chile had included questions on gender identity in population-based surveys. Based on U.S. data, Valfort (2017) estimates that 4.4 per cent of the total population is LGBTI, of which 3.5 per cent is LGB, 0.5 per cent is trans, and 0.4 per cent is intersex.

2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the quinquennial Japan census. The 2020 census consisted of sixteen questions. There was one question on sex/gender (*danjo no betsu*), which allowed for two possible responses: *otoko* (male) or *onna* (female). There was one question on nationality (*kokuseki*), which again allowed for two possible responses: *Nihon* (Japanese) or *gaikoku* (foreign country)—if *gaikoku* was selected there was space to input the country name. In this way, intranational ethnic diversity remains undocumented. There were no questions designed to collect information about sexual orientation. Question four asked the respondent to indicate the relationship of the household members to the head of household. If a same-sex partner indicated that they were the spouse of the head of household, this would be reclassified as *sono ta* (“other relatives”; i.e, uncles, aunts, and cousins), systematically erasing same-sex couples from the tally (Fujisawa, 2020). The fact that same-sex marriage is not recognised in Japan is cited as the reason for this intentional misclassification. This is a missed opportunity to expand notions of who makes up a family or household unit through the utilisation of quantitative data. In contrast, the United States Census 2020 allowed respondents to explicitly indicate that they were in a same-sex relationship (United States Census Bureau, 2020).[24] Meanwhile, in Australia, the 2016 census enabled the respondent to complete an alternative online form containing three response options to the question on sex— “Male, Female, and Other (please specify)”—and the census has been able to publish estimates of same-sex couples living together on the basis of household relationship questions since 1996 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). However, Hofmann et al. (2018) make the point that “statistical visibility” is not necessarily linked to liberation and progress, noting the tensions between fostering robust data collection on LGBT+ populations and the dangers and risks inherent in quantifying and “normalising” said populations. This raises some rather thorny epistemological and ontological questions: *How* is the LGBT+ population measured; and, *who* counts as LGBT+?

In a comparative review of equality data collection practices in the European Union, “Confidentiality and anonymity”, “representativeness”, and “categorisation” were cited as key issues in collecting data on LGBTI people (European Commission, 2017). To the first issue, people who are not open about their LGBT+ identity may be reluctant to participate in surveys, especially if anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Online surveys are a potential solution. However, not all people have access to the Internet or sufficient computer literacy. If the only people who participate in surveys are those who feel safe to disclose their LGBT+ identities, or only those who can successfully navigate online spaces, this means representativeness—the second issue—is compromised, quashing attempts to generalise. Finally, deciding how to define the population and the types of categories to include in a given survey, must be considered alongside how the respondent will interpret these categories, how the setting and survey-type will influence the respondent’s answer, and how respondent’s answer may change over time. A person’s sexuality is not necessarily consistent over the long-term, and some people report changes in sexual

Table 1.2 Surveys from various institutions measuring LGBT+ population in Japan

Year	Institute (company)	Sample and Method	Results
2018	Dentsu Diversity Lab (Dentsu Inc.)	*n* = 6229; aged 20-59; country-wide internet survey	**LGBTQ = 8.9%** Straight = 90.1%
2019	Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. (Hakuhodo DY Group)	*n* = 347,816; aged 20-59; country-wide internet survey	**LGBT = 10%** Cisgender and heterosexual = 89.4% (0.6% non-response) [Sexual orientation: Heterosexual = 93%; Homosexual = 0.9%, Bisexual = 2.8%; Asexual = 0.9%; S.O. Questioning = 1.4%; Other = 1.0% Gender identity: Cisgender = 93.9%; Transgender = 1.8%; X gender = 2.5%; G.I. Questioning = 1.2%; Other = 0.6%]

Source: Dentsu Inc. (2019); Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. (2019).

attraction, sexual relationships, and sexual identity (Ueno 2010). If, for instance, in a self-report survey a woman indicates that she has had sex with women in the last 5 years (behaviour-based question), does the researcher consequently label this respondent as "lesbian"? Asking identity-based questions may be equally problematic. For example, the General Social Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2014 allowed the following responses to the question, "Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself': straight (heterosexual), gay or lesbian, bisexual, other, or don't know" (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). This rather limited list of categories may lead to many participants misclassifying themselves or otherwise to select "other", both equally unhelpful if the goal is to better understand a specific population. Gates (2012) argues that, "limiting the LGBT population to those who explicitly adopt those identities … will likely fail to capture the experiences or characteristics of a relatively large portion of sexual minorities" (p.709). Having consistent categories means that meaningful comparisons can be made over time, and trends can be observed . Surveys have to strike a balance between presenting an exhaustive list of categories that may result in insufficient sample sizes for statistical purposes, and presenting a short list of broad "catch-all" categories that may alienate some respondents.

Recently, some research institutes have conducted surveys that attempt to quantify the LGBT+ population in Japan (see table 1.2). Based on the results in these surveys, it can be said that at least eight per cent of the population is LGBT+. At approximately 10 million, this equates to a population slightly larger than Osaka Prefecture.[25] Put another way, the LGBT+ population in Japan is equivalent to the combined number of individuals with the surnames Satō, Suzuki, Takahashi, and Tanaka, or to the number of people who are left-handed (Yanagisawa et al., 2016). Looking at table 1.2, beyond the "L", "G", "B" and "T" designations, respondents could also identify as *museiai* (asexual), questioning, or x gender. *Asexual* is an identifier for someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction, while someone who is unsure of sexual orientation or gender identity can identify as *questioning* (Mardell, 2016). Meanwhile, *x gender* is understood to signify that one's gender is neither female nor male (Dale, 2012, 2014). In these surveys, who exactly is included in *sono ta* ("other") is not fully articulated. It can be seen in table 1.2 that the research

institutes grouped participant data differently, resulting in a lack of consensus regarding how exactly the "LGBT+" population is defined in Japan. Further, the terminology used to categorise the participants who are not LGBT+ is also different in each of the surveys: in the 2018 survey, they are referred to as *sutorēto* ("straight", i.e., heterosexual); and in the 2019 survey they are those participants who are both cisgender and *iseiai* (heterosexual). Being able to broadcast neatly packaged information such as "one in eleven people in Japan is LGBT" (Dentsu Inc., 2019) can help sensitise people to the fact that every day, at work and in the street, they are interacting with people who are LGBT+. Unfortunately, these surveys exhibit the same methodological issues described above. Specifically, they relied on non-probability sampling techniques including purposive and convenience sampling. As a result, an overrepresentation of the LGBT+ population may be expressed in the data.

Some city-level surveys, namely the "Survey of awareness among residents regarding sexual minorities" conducted in Nagoya in 2018, and the "Survey on diversity of work and life, and coexistence among the residents of Osaka City" conducted in 2019, in contrast, randomly sampled participants. In the Nagoya City survey, 2.3% or 63 people indicated that they were *seiteki shōsūsha* ("sexual minorities"; Nagoya City Gender Equality Bureau, 2018). In the Osaka City survey, of 4,285 valid responses, it was found that 3.3% of participants identified as LGBTA,[26] while 5.5% expressed that that did not want to decide, or had not yet decided their sexual orientation (Kamano et al, 2019). Notably, 322 participants (7.5%) indicated that they did not understand the question regarding sexual orientation. Based on the findings of the Osaka City survey, Hiramori and Kamano (2020a) make several recommendations when including questions regarding SOGI diversity in population-based surveys in Japan. Notably, they advocate for a three-step method to measure the trans status of respondents, and that the phrase "*suki ni naru seibetsu* (the gender of people you like)" should not be used to measure sexual orientation. Instead, in their survey, Kanamo et al. (2019) used a six-category question that included a definition of each category for sexual orientation identity, and then separate questions for romantic attraction, sexual attraction, and sexual behaviour respectively.[27] As for gender identity, the two-step method has been shown to effectively differentiate trans and non-trans populations in representative surveys (Tate et al., 2013; Lombardi and Banik, 2016). It consists of a question that asks about the respondent's assigned sex at birth (i.e., "Male"; "Female") and a question that asks how the respondent identifies (e.g. "Male"; "Female"; "Trans"; "Do not identify as female, male, or trans"). However, Hiramori and Kamano (2020a) found that the two-step method was more difficult to answer than the three-step method, which includes an additional question on feelings of gender dysphoria. They went on to explain that, for the two-step method, because the Japanese term *seibetsu* is used in both the question about assigned sex at birth—*shusshoji no seibetsu*—and the question about current gender identity—*genzai ninshiki shiteiru seibetsu*—respondents felt that they were being asked the same question twice. Further, because there is no expression equivalent to the English term "straight" to indicate heterosexual identity in Japanese—as the inconsistency across the aforementioned surveys illustrates—it was necessary to add the phrase "*sunawachi gei/rezubian to de wa nai* (not gay or lesbian)" to the heterosexual option. Recognising that the general population does not yet have a clear understanding of SOGI diversity, including explanations with the categories presented is important. Exemplified here is the need for careful and concise wording to avoid confusion, and an understanding that, for many, these kinds of questions may have never even been considered before.

Finally, regarding the population of foreign nationals in Japan with the purpose of work (i.e., "expatriates", as defined in this paper), the Ministry of Justice provides several key data. In a report titled *Basic Plan for Immigration Control and Residency Management*, it is indicated that the number of expatriates that newly entered Japan in 2018 was approximately 101,000, and the number of mid to long-term expatriates was approximately 351,000 (2019).[28] By status of residence, "engineer/specialist in humanities/international services" made up the largest proportion of mid to long-term expatriates at 64 per cent, followed by "skilled labourer" (11.5%), "business manager" (7.5%), "intra-company transferee" (5%), "instructor" (3.5%), and "others" (8.5%). There is no way of knowing the number of expatriates in Japan—or globally, for that matter—that are also LGBT+. The *Expat Insider* survey conducted by InterNations (2018), mentioned in section 1.1.1, and another survey of 18,059 expatriates conducted by HSBC (2019), both included participants from Japan.[29] However, neither of these surveys collected data about sexual orientation or gender identity. The only Japan-based survey mentioned above to include a question on nationality was the "Survey on Diversity of Work and Life, and Coexistence among the

Residents of Osaka City" (Kamano et al., 2019). Of the respondents, 2.9% indicated they were non-Japanese nationals, and it is not clear how many also identified as LGBT+. The census captures data about nationality, but, as already discussed, does not recognise same-sex couples. The *tokutei katsudō* (designated activities; DA) visa is a viable way for married same-sex expatriate spouse to secure residency with their partner in Japan. There are many categories subsumed under the DA visa including "internship", "working holiday", and "amateur sports athlete". Wakui Noriko, an Immigration lawyer that took part in the research, explained that the partner in a same-sex expatriate couple that holds the DA visa will be categorised as "other". At the end of the 2020 period, the National Statistics Center (2021) indicated that 72,190 individuals, or about sixty-five per cent of total DA visa holders, were listed as "other". A Kyodo News article states that 93 foreigners in Japan were granted permission to bring their same-sex partners to the country under the DA visa between 2013 and 2020 ("Japan granted 93 foreigners", 2021). However, the author was unable to locate the alleged source of the data that was mentioned in the article: a "government survey" conducted by the Immigration Services Agency. Regardless, it should be noted that there are LGBT+ couples that do not or cannot pursue the DA visa route. The DA visa is not an option for those who are not married, for instance. Based on the above, it can be said that many individuals at the intersections of the categories of "expatriate" and "LGBT+" exist in an in between, undocumented space.

1.2.3 Chapter outline

First and foremost, this paper is not an attempt to characterise LGBT+ individuals living in Japan as dispossessed, suffering victims of an oppressive society, as some English language scholarship has done in the past (e.g., Summerhawk et al., 1998). Instead, the vibrant, nuanced ways in which LGBT+ individuals navigate identity, sexuality and gender, and relationships in their daily lives, inside and outside the workplace, and pursue, in Butler's (2004) terms a "liveable life", will be highlighted. Far from depicting all doom and gloom, this research reveals stories of self-determination, resilience, and compassion. Certainly, there is much more work to be done when it comes to recognition and support of LGBT+ individuals in Japan, but the number of companies both large and small demonstrating a willingness to cultivate more inclusive work environments is promising.

This paper is organised as follows: Chapter 2 opens by detailing the research framework that guides the current inquiry. After establishing the researcher's worldview, and introducing the research questions and methodology, the four social categories salient to this research, namely age, social gender, nationality, and marital status, are described and compared. Then, a multilevel relational framework for workplace diversity in the context of Japan is presented. This model helps to ground the research and understand the phenomena being studied at three levels of analysis (i.e., macro-, meso-, and micro-levels). Chapter 3 and chapter 4 constitute the literature review. In chapter 4, three major streams of research that typify management and organisational studies scholarship on LGBT+ subjectivities are considered: identity management; discrimination; and forms of organisational support. The review is multidisciplinary in scope, with insights from research conducted in several countries including Australia, India, Germany, South Africa, and the UK. Meanwhile, chapter looks at the origins and development of intersectionality, as well as how intersectionality may be operationalised in empirical research. The genealogy of intersectionality is shown to be plural and diverse, and its success as a traveling theory is highlighted. The chapter closes by determining the perceived gaps in the diversity manangement and expatriate literature. In this way, a rationale for the current research into the workplace experiences of LGBT+ people in the context of Japan is clearly presented.

Bowleg (2008) insists that researchers employing an intersectionality perspective must, by drawing on multidisciplinary insights, gain an intimate understanding of the socio-historical realities of historically oppressed groups. Therefore, in chapter 5 and chapter 6, the socio-historical context and the business community context, respectively, for LGBT+ employees working and living in Japan is elucidated. Chapter 5 commences with an overview of the formation of queer practices and subjectivities across Japanese history, before reviewing the contemporary social and legal status of LGBT+ people in Japan. The chapter ends by exploring six social institutions that are foundational to daily life in Japan: family; education; health; state; economy; and media. Revealed here are systems of privilege and oppression that are taken for granted or otherwise rendered invisible by dominant ideologies in Japanese society. Here, it will be argued that while normalised and even celebrated practices of queer sexuality and gender-nonconformity have always existed in Japan they are relegated to specific times and places. Those who make transgressions outside these contexts are met with confusion, disgust, and violence. A narrative of the “tolerant state” belies a lack of legal protections and institutionalised inequalities and discrimination. Chapter 6 concerns the development and global dissemination of diversity management, how diversity is framed and managed in the context of Japan, and how Japanese businesses have respondend to SOGI diversity in particular. Specifically, by drawing on case studies and interview data, LGBT+ initiatives related to policies, education, and marketing will be discussed. Importantly, both Japanese and expatriate experiences will be considered in this chapter, with the voices of the research participants providing illuminating examples of how these developments actually function in practice in the workplace and in the wider business community.

Chapters 7 through 11 comprise the empirical study. In chapter 7, the method for Study 1 is explained. This includes elaborating upon participant demographics, the research process, data analysis, and the subsequent generation of theories and conceptual frameworks. In particular, the development of the interview protocol, and the way in which data was collected and coded, guided by the principles of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), are described in detail. The chapter ends by introducing the emergent theories of the Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort (J cohort) and expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort), *workplace climate of exclusion* and *the gaijin effect*, respectively. Chapter 8 encompasses the findings from Study 1. First, levels of disclosure across four different life domains, namely family, friends, work, and public, for the J cohort and the E cohort are presented. Comparisons between the two cohorts as well as across different identity categories, including age and gender, are made. The next part of the chapter covers the workplace narratives of the J cohort and the E cohort gleaned from analysis of the coded data. Organising the data into several themes or subthemes helped in presenting a cohesive narrative of the lived experiences of each cohort. A discussion of each cohort is then provided, centred on the research questions generated in Study 1. In chapter 9 the method for Study 2 is outlined. This chapter flows much the same as chapter 7, providing participant demographics, and describing data collection and analysis techniques used for the interviews and short-answer survey. Along with the standard coding procedures used in Study 1, a novel approach was also developed. This new coding process is described before the emergent theory, namely *the challenging/rewarding continuum*, and research questions for the LGBT+ expatriate couples (C cohort) are introduced. In chapter 10, the workplace narrative of Study 2 is elaborated upon, followed by the discussion. Coded data from the short-answer survey provides further understandings of the C cohort experiences. Additionally, by synthesising findings from Study 1 and Study 2, an intersectional analysis of the four social categories is presented. In this way, the experiences of the J cohort, the E cohort, and the C cohort could be compared and contrasted across dimensions of difference. In chapter 11, recommendations for each of the three cohorts, as well as for allies, researchers, and practitioners, are proffered. These recommendations are based on extant research as well as the novel research presented here. Finally, the paper is concluded in chapter 12. The main findings of Study 1, Study 2, and the intersectional analysis are summarised in the first half. In the second half, limitionations related to the research design, sample, and data analysis are explicated. While describing the limitations, avenues for future research are offered.

Notes

1. Working-age population is defined by the OECD (2022) as those aged 15 to 64.
2. Women's labour force participation rate is a proportion of total working population (those in Japan over 15 years of age; MHLW, 2019).
3. Shimoji and Ogaya (2020) note that Korekawa's definition of "international children", and subsequent population estimate, which are based on MHLW's demographics, only take into consideration those who were born in Japan since 1987 to a Japanese parent and a foreign national parent. Despite a reluctance to essentialise "Japanese" and "foreign", they identify five additional categories of people who could be considered of mixed heritage. Therefore, it can be said that the proportion of "non-Japanese" people living in Japan is on track to be higher than Korekawa's estimate.
4. In Japan, *keikan* ("sodomy") was criminalised for the first and only time from 1873 to 1881 (Furukawa, 1994).
5. The other categories in the typology of expatriates developed based on the survey are as follows: the Optimizer (16%), the Romantic (12%), the Explorer (12%), the Traveling Spouse (8%), and the Student (7%; InterNations, 2018).
6. Here, and throughout this paper, "Other", when referring to those (being colonised) who are subjected to the discursive practice of *othering* (by the colonisers; see chapter 2, note 5), is capitalised intentionally. This connotation originated in postcolonial studies (see generally Ashcroft et al., 2007). It has since been adopted by scholars in other fields, including in studies of gender and sexuality (e.g., Rumens, 2018a).
7. This included all listed companies (*jōjō kigyō*). The data were sourced from Toyo Keizai Inc.: "Yakuin Shikiho [Executives Quarterly]".
8. "Cisgender" refers to individuals whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (World Health Organisation, 2016; see also list of key words).
9. Fukuoka (1997) states that "[a]lthough the matter of blood or race is a sensitive issue in Japan, historical records clearly reveal that various peoples have come to live on the Japanese archipelago. They have come from the Korean peninsula, from the Chinese mainland, and from still further afar. The "pure Japanese" is actually a blend of these different groups of people. In other words, Japan is, in a very real sense, an early prototype of the multi-racial society" (p. 4). As Ivy (1995) argues, "the articulation of a unified Japanese ethnos…is entirely modern" (p. 4).
10. Revell (1997) notes that this oft-quoted estimate of 700 titles included any book with "Japanese" in the title or which discussed "obviously Japanese concepts" (p. 74).
11. Another politician, deputy prime minister Asō Tarō has, on more than one occasion, described Japan as a "one language, one ethnic group" country ("Aso says Japan is", 2005; Yamaguchi, 2020).
12. The Ainu are an indigenous people of Northern Japan, the majority of whom are now living in modern day Hokkaidō, part of their ancestral land (Winchester, 2020). According to The Foundation for Ainu Culture (n.d.), as a result of Meiji era (1868-1912) policies, only a few people can still speak Ainu language.
13. The Ryūkyū Islands are an archipelago of many islands, now a part of present-day Okinawa (Akamine, 2016). Archaeological records indicate that before the advent of agriculture in the 11th and 12th centuries, there existed a "Northern Ryūkyū Culture", which took influence from Japan's Yayoi culture, and a "Southern Ryūkyū Culture", which was more strongly associated with the prehistorical cultures of Taiwan, Indonesia, and the Southeast Asian islands.
14. Here, and throughout this paper, the term "community" is sometimes used as shorthand to describe the general populations of people or entities (e.g., "business community") in

their many communities. It is not meant to imply the existence of a singular monolithic group.

15. "Black" (when referring to race) and its derivative forms are capitalised intentionally throughout this paper, in line with The Associated Press Stylebook (55th Edition). https://blog.ap.org/announcements/the-decision-to-capitalize-black
16. Regarding the appellation "sexual minority", the author finds both words in this term to be problematic. In the most basic sense, "minority" describes a smaller number or part. However, when used politically to designate a group of individuals, it highlights power relations between dominant and subordinate groups. Being called a minority may carry a sense of being lesser, of having less agency and voice within a given society. As for the use of "sexual", it has the capacity to exclude or erase phenomena beyond sex, sexual practices or sexual orientation, namely, phenomena dealing with gender, gender dysphoria and gender-variant behaviour or feelings. Thus, at best, the term "sexual minority" inadequately represents the groups in question, and at worst is potentially damaging and demeaning.
17. Someone who is intersex has anatomy that does not completely fit into either of society's typical definitions of male or female (Mardell, 2016; see also list of key words).
18. Similarly, in Japanese, *sei* can be used to convey both "sex" and "gender". The kanji for *sei* is used in forming compounds such as *seibetsu* ("gender"), *seiki* ("genitals"), and *seikō* ("sexual intercourse").
19. Numerous critiques were mounted against Connell's conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity, mostly with regards to definitional and ontological ambiguities (see, for example, Wetherall & Edley, 1999; Demetriou, 2001; Whitehead, 2002). Connell's original theorisation was subsequently reformulated (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), elaborating on the concept in the following ways: that the agency of subordinated groups as well as the intersectionality of gender with other social categories should be recognised; that hegemonic masculinity may be challenged, contested, and thus changed, and; that scholars should analyse hegemonic masculinities at three levels (i.e., local, regional, and global).
20. Rather than appending the label "hegemonic", Connell (1987) conceived the culturally dominant pattern of femininity instead as "emphasized femininity" to acknowledge the asymmetrical position of masculinities and femininities in a patriarchal gender order (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The author maintains the use of the term hegemonic femininity in this thesis, in line with its usage in more recent scholarship (e.g., Schippers, 2007; Charlebois, 2013).
21. A detractor of Connell, Tosh (2004) argues that there is no *a priori* reason to grant causal primacy to the functional requirements of patriarchy among a range of other possible stratifying principles. Indeed, we should question the universality of patriarchy (see also chapter 2, note 9).
22. In Japanese, "*nado*" ("etc."), written using kanji or hiragana, is typically used in place of "+". For example, *LGBTnado* is used on the websites of several municipalities, including Hyogo, Kyoto, Nagasaki, Nagoya, and Osaka.
23. The Washington Post reports that bell hooks (born Gloria Jean Watkins) wrote her name in lowercase because she wanted people to focus on her books (McGrady, 2021).
24. The United States census bureau previously produced counts of same-sex couples from 2000 and 2010 census data using responses to questions about sex and relationship. Some opposite-sex couples mismarked their sex and were incorrectly counted as same-sex couples in initial estimates. URL: https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4425959-Test-Questionnaire-for-2020-Census.html#document/p3/a414347

25. Population of Osaka Prefecture as of August 2022 is approximately 8.7 million. URL: http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/toukei/jinkou/index.html
26. The “A” in “LGBTA” stands for asexual.
27. As Hiramori and Kamano (2020a) explain, another limitation of their survey was related to semantics. In the English language, “female” and “male” (biological sex) are distinguished from “woman” and “man” (gender). However, in Japanese, the terms “*mesu*” (female) and “*osu*” (male) have biological connotations but are not used when referring to humans. Thus, questions in the survey related to sexual attraction, sexual behaviour and so forth do not differentiate between the gender of the person and the biological sex of the person.
28. Excluding the statuses of “Diplomat”, “Official”, and “Technical Intern Training”.
29. For a country to be listed in any of the indices and in the overall ranking, a sample size of at least 75 survey participants per destination was required for the Expat Insider survey (InterNations, 2018). Similarly, the Expat Explorer survey required a minimum sample size of 100 expatriate respondents for a country to be included in league table results (HSBC, 2017).

Chapter 2 – Research Framework

2.1 Development and design

2.1.1 Researcher's background and epistemological stance

Researching LGBT+ organisation sexualities and genders developed organically out of the author's master's thesis, which focused on the intercultural competence of expatriates in Japan (Anderson, 2017). Some of the sample group in that study identified as LGBT+. Gaining an understanding of how they navigated working in Japan, not only as expatriates, but also as LGBT+ individuals sensitised the author to the concept of intersectionality. A complicated interplay of identities drove behaviour and decision-making processes. Subsequent to personal communications, the author became curious to explore the workplace experiences of Japanese LGBT+ employees. Additionally, questions about the viability of Japan as host country for LGBT+ expatriates surfaced. Entering the doctorate program, the next logical step was to focus specifically on the LGBT+ population. One of the biggest assumptions going into the research was that disclosing information about sexuality and gender was much healthier than hiding things from people. Systematic literature reviews of predominantly U.S.- and UK-based studies indicate that openness about LGBT+ identity in the workplace has been associated with positive psychological health outcomes, well-being at work, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (e.g., Badgett et al.,2013; Ozeren, 2014; McFadden, 2015). The author wanted to know if these results would be replicated in the Japanese workplace context. Thus, a promising starting point for the inquiry was set. From there, the research expanded and evolved. Early in the process, it was decided that a mix of LGBT+ Japanese and non-Japanese people would be interviewed. Based on previous experience and familiarity, constructivist grounded theory would guide data collection and analysis efforts. This particular version of grounded theory, as explicated by Charmaz (2006), is rooted in social constructionism. Concisely, a researcher with a social constructivist perspective embraces multiple realities, and interprets the meanings of participant's words and views within the specific contexts from which they arise (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007). In other words, "social constructionism draws attention to the fact that human experience, including perception, is mediated historically, culturally and linguistically" (Willig, 2008, p. 7). Recognising that the researcher is an active participant in the grounded theory process (Suddaby, 2006), here the researcher's background and worldview should be presented in order to understand biases that shape the research aims and development.

The researcher is a white, Australian-born cis man. Further, they are living without physical challenges, speak English as their first language, have received tertiary education, and are from a middle-class socioeconomic background. The researcher's pronouns are he/him. As a result, in many contexts, the researcher had access to privilege by virtue of belonging to several "dominant" groups. At the time of commencing Study 1 the researcher identified as gay and had been living in Tokyo, Japan for almost four years. In this time they had accrued linguistic and cultural knowhow. That being said, the researcher largely remained a cultural and linguistic outsider, and any observation, assessment, or conclusion made in this paper reflects this outsider perspective. The researcher's status as a cultural "outsider" may have resulted in more open and explicit disclosure than if a person who was Japanese had conducted the interviews. On the other hand, some of the interviewees may have been more comfortable and consequently more open with a Japanese interviewer. At times the researcher's ethnicity (as well as gender, age, etc.) located him in a position of relative power, while at other times it located him in a position of relative powerlessness. Drawing on Foucauldian and Butlerian poststructuralist philosophy, the researcher employed a queer theory stance. Characterised by a variety of methods related to individual identity, queer theory challenges notions of singular, fixed, and "normal" identities (Watson, 2005). Some key elements of the queer theory stance, as assembled by Plummer (2005), are:

- Both the heterosexual/homosexual binary and the sex/gender split are challenged;
- All identity categories are open, fluid, and nonfixed;
- Mainstream homosexuality is critiqued; and
- Power is embodied discursively.

Regarding the first element, as already determined in chapter 1 (section 1.2.1), building on Köllen's (2016) integrative diversity management approach, the author sees sex and gender as separate phenomena that operate on spectrums of experience, just as homosexuality and heterosexuality, while often consideted as absolute positions and diametrically opposed, are actually experienced with varying degrees of fluidity. In this way, multiple sexualities, sexes and genders, as well as gender expressions, can be recognised, organised, and constituted as human.

Regarding the second element, on face value, a queer threory stance runs contrary to the realities of placing participants into neat, quantifiable boxes for the purpose of making comparisons across groups, as evidenced in the current inquiry. A key distinction between LGBT+ studies and queer theory, as purported by Scott (2018), is that, while LGBT+ studies often embrace the coming out narrative and essentialised identity categories, queer theory is fundamentally concerned with denaturalising categories, in order to "examine their contingencies and evolutions, to map how they are created, maintained, and/or challenged" (p. 6). The researcher then, in their attempt to qualify the phenomena in question, crystallises, if only for a moment, the very categories they seek to deconstruct and challenge. Regarding the third element, in countries such as the United States, activists and policymakers have adopted the argument that sexuality—and, to an extent, transness—is an innate "born this way" trait as a way to progress the rights of the LGBT+ individuals (Garretson & Suhay, 2016; Draz, 2017). The author does not dismiss or discount the importance of this idea, or the positive changes it has brought about. Noting the competing logics of identity politics and queer theory, Gamson (1995) concludes that fixed identity categories are both the basis for oppression and the basis for political power. Unfortunately, this power has not been enjoyed equally across the so-called LGBT+ "community". The uniting banner of "LGBT" belies long-standing historical tensions punctuated by different experiences, concerns, and agendas (Githens, 2009; Richardson & Monro, 2012). The "normalisation" of certain LGBT+ subjectivities, particularly gay men, has come at the expense of the further marginalisation of other subjectivities, namely trans people (Drucker, 2015; Broomfield, 2015). Thus, the researcher walks the line of, on the one hand, understanding the necessity of deploying identity as a form of political power while, on the other hand, also remaining cognisant of the fact that identities are changeable and fragile, and that identities are contoured unevenly by privilege and oppression. Regarding the fourth point, as mentioned, queer theory—and post-structuralism more widely—holds that power is communicated through language and knowledge production (i.e., "discourse"). Since it came out of the humantities, a foundational and enduringly popular application of queer theory involves critically engaging with linguistic and visual texts (e.g., books and film), referred to as *discourse analysis* (Barker & Scheele, 2016). Thus, throughout this work there will be a distinct focus on interrogating language use, particularly as it pertains to diversity and inclusion discourse, and questioning: what is being said and what is left unsaid; what assumptions shape this discourse; are there internal contradictions; and who does this discourse serve?

2.1.2 Research questions

The research questions were produced reflexively[1] and in a circuitous manner as the theoretical lens through which to view the analysed data changed over time. Good qualitative questions are usually developed and refined throughout the research process and are open-ended and nondirectional (Creswell, 2007; Agee, 2009). The overarching research question was as follows: What are the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals living in Japan; and how are these experiences (re)shaped by other aspects of difference? As with other intersectionality research exploring LGBT+ employee experiences (e.g., Colgan, 2016), by examining how particular combinations of identity categories interact to shape lived experience, the aim of this research was to demonstrate clearly that LGBT+ people are not a homogeneous group. To this end, questions specific to each of the three cohorts were developed:

1. Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort (J cohort):
    a. Why do Japanese LGBT+ employees feel excluded in their workplace?
    b. In what ways do experiences of exclusion influence Japanese LGBT+ employee attitudes, behaviours, and performance?
2. LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort):
    a. How do LGBT+ expatriates reconcile their visible foreigner identity with their (in)visible LGBT+ identity?
    b. How do LGBT+ expatriates assess the level of safety and inclusion in the context of Japan?
3. LGBT+ expatriate couples cohort (C cohort):
    a. Why can't LGBT+ expatriate couples see a future in Japan and how does a mindset of temporariness influence the expatriate experience?
    b. How can LGBT+ expatriate couples break the cycle of rejection and what kinds of support are important for expatriate couples in Japan?

These questions will be reiterated and expounded upon, for the J and E cohorts in chapter 7, and for the C cohort in chapter 9. For now, it can be said that the above questions reflect the exploratory nature of the current inquiry. They are broad in scope yet grounded in the data.

2.1.3 Methodology

The researcher employed a qualitative methodology, across two rounds in the field. Here, the "fieldsite" was the Greater Tokyo Area (GTA), located in the Kanto region of Japan. With an estimated population of 39.1 million, the GTA, which spreads out from *Tōkyo-to* (Tokyo Metropolis) and into the surrounding prefectures, represents the largest urban area in Japan, and the fourth largest "mega-region"[2] in the world in terms of population and economic output (United Nations, 2020).[3] Tokyo Metropolis is itself made up of 23 *tokubetsu-ku* ("special wards"; usually referred to as "cities" in English, e.g., Shibuya City) and 39 other municipalities (cities, towns, and villages; Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2022a). Along with the researcher, most of the participants lived and worked within the 23-*ku* area, the most populous area in the GTA; as of the 1st of April 2020, it had a population of 9,741,595 people, of which 479,198 were foreign residents (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2020b, c).[4] In the United States, data suggests that at least 80 per cent of the total LGBT population lives in urban settings (Movement Advancement Project, 2019). Reflecting what Gray (2009) refers to as "narratives of escape to urban oases" (p. 3), cities are seen as places that, for people who are LGBT+, offer more opportunities, and greater access to community, resources, and support than rural areas. Thus, queer people tend to migrate to urban centres, creating a positive feedback loop. For the current research, it was assumed that this same logic would apply in Japan, with the population of LGBT+ people expected to be most heavily concentrated in Tokyo. Similarly, it was expected that the greatest number of expatriates in Japan would be living and working in Tokyo. Therefore, from both a practical and research focus standpoint, it made sense to designate the GTA as the site of data collection.

Using purposive and convenience techniques, a non-probability sample was recruited based on existing connections. Subsequent snowballing diversified the sample. Study 1 comprised of in-depth group and one-on-one interviews. Interviewees included Japanese LGBT+ individuals and LGBT+ expatriate individuals, as well as allies and key informants that spoke of their advocacy work or in their professional capacity (n = 31). Study 2 focused on LGBT+ expatriate couples, and data were collected through group interviews and a short-answer survey; two lawyers were also interviewed (n = 28). The researcher utilised a constructivist grounded theory approach proffered by Charmaz (2006), which is characterized by a fluid, interactive, and open-ended research process. In grounded theory, data collection and analysis occur concurrently, and the emerging theory determines which data should be collected next. Timonen et al. (2018) aver that grounded theory is and should always be inductive in its approach, meaning that understandings of phenomena and processes emerge from and are grounded in the data. This is in contrast to deductive studies that test *a priori* hypotheses. Grounded theory is useful when: theory is not available to explain a process; and when the literature may have models available, but they were developed and tested on samples and populations other than those of interest to the qualitative researcher (Creswell, 2007). Given the aim of the current inquiry, that is, to explore intersectionality as a lived experience for LGBT+ individuals in Japan, grounded theory was deemed to be a suitable research method.

The rationale for presenting the methodology at this point is that the research findings will not remain restricted to the later chapters of the text. The rich empirical data will be drawn upon throughout, complementing the established literature. Data triangulation (Denzin, 1970, 1978) was achieved by comparing the research data with multiple other primary sources of data, including: documentaries (e.g., *Watashi wa Watashi: Over the Rainbow*, Masuda, 2017); memoirs (e.g., *Sōmubucho wa toransujendā: Chichi to shite, onna to shite,* Okabe, 2018); fiction (e.g., *Forbidden Colours*, Mishima, 1951/2008); and ephemera such as magazines, pamphlets, photographs, and posters. Additionally, the researcher attended various symposia, including *LGBTI and Corporate Activities* (2018) and the *daisankai reinbō kokkai* (3rd "Rainbow Diet", 2018), and events such as *Tokyo Rainbow Pride*, Tokyo's annual pride event, and the Marriage For All Japan *dōseikon soshō ōen ibento* (same-sex marriage lawsuit support event, 2019; see appendix B for full list). This allowed the researcher to gain a sense of both the "what" and the "who" in the discourse surrounding LGBT+ issues in Japan: *what* were the major talking points; and *who* were the key players (i.e., individuals, non-profits, corporate entities, and so forth). Correlating *people*, *time*, and *space* (Denzin, 2009) the researcher could more fully elucidate the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals in Japan.

2.2 Social categories

The researcher is primarily interested in how power relations in daily life are negotiated by individuals, and how, in turn, this negotiation shapes and is shaped by systems of privilege and oppression. From the outset of the study, the unit of analysis was the individual, and data were collected through primarily qualitative means. How the participants constructed, managed, and deployed their identity in different contexts was explored in the interviews and short-answer survey. Put simply, identity can be thought of as relational tool used to make comparisons between persons. Jenkins (2014) argues that all human identities are *social* identities, and that "similarity and difference are the dynamic principles of identification, and are at the heart of the human world" (p. 18). As Moulin de Souza and Parker (2022) put it, "identity is the place of connection between the individual and the social" (p. 69). A product of human interaction is the development and (re)enactment of social categorisation systems based on difference (Ridgeway, 2006). The other is categorised as different from or similar to known, socially predictable objects including the self. In social contexts, the other is rendered comprehensible based on cultural schema or stereotypes that act as knowledge shortcuts upon which predictable and known patterns of behaviour are inscribed. After this evaluation, which is often instantaneous and operates below the level of consciousness, we proceed with the interaction, having anticipated how the other will behave. Of course, while social categorisation systems are useful and efficient, they are also often inaccurate and incomplete, and subject to change based on new information. As such, social categorisation is a dynamic process that is enacted up and down, as well as across, the various layers of society. Ultimately, structural inequalities stem from the way that humans, as social beings, evaluate others based on abstract, categorical distinctions, rather than on idiosyncratic individual differences.

From the above, it can be seen that social identities are relational and hierarchical, each with their own set of value judgements. It has already been stated that difference tends to be used in reference to nondominant groups as a means of othering[5] by dominant groups. By disaggregating attributes like education or skin color from their source in complex, multi-attributed individual people, abstract categories or groups of people are created. In this paper, "social categories" refer to dimensions of difference (e.g., age, gender), under which specific positions, that is, identities (e.g., "young"; "woman") are subsumed. Much of the time, as with the nondominant/dominant division itself, social identities appear in dichotomous pairings. For example, the social category "sexuality" may be parsed into "homosexual" and "heterosexual". As a result of *status beliefs*—commonly held assumptions about the value attributed to a group of people—individuals in certain groups (e.g., "men") consistently emerge as more influential and apparently more competent than those in other groups (e.g., "women") across a wide variety of settings (Ridgeway, 2006). Because they are embedded in social relational processes, status beliefs persist despite significant socio-economic transformation, such as the increased participation rate of women in the labour market. Thus, Ridgeway believes that workplace inequality cannot be understood, let alone dismantled, without first examining the taken-for-granted social relational processes that are enacted within the organisation and disseminated throughout wider society.

When analysing and comparing social categories, researchers warn against ascribing sameness or equivalence (e.g., Verloo, 2006). In other words, not all social categories are equally important, and the roles they play in people's lives are uneven across time and space. Yuval-Davis (2006) writes:

> In specific historical situations and in relation to specific people there are some social divisions that are more important than others in constructing specific positionings. At the same time, there are some social divisions, such as gender, stage in the life cycle, ethnicity and class, that tend to shape most people's lives in most social locations… (p. 203)

As already asserted in this paper, context is paramount. Further, an intersectionality perspective sees social identities not as inherent aspects of an individual's life but rather a reflection of the social and psychological outcomes of systems of privilege and oppression (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). In the current research, based on analysis of the data, four social categories were found to be relevant to the construction of identities for the participants beyond their LGBT+ identity: age, social gender, nationality, and marital status. From filling out official documents to casual workplace conversations, power was communicated based on positionality across each of these social categories in Japanese society. For the participants, what was said or, more often than not, what was left unsaid had the potential to shift the power dynamic. The intersections of these dimensions of difference produced varying levels of privilege and oppression. In the following paragraphs, each of these categories will be briefly discussed in turn as a primer for the intersectional analysis presented in chapter 11 (section 11.4). At this point it must be stated emphatically that the characterisations of Japanese people and Japanese culture below, and indeed throughout this paper, should be viewed as generalisations based on common sense expectations. This includes characterisations that are explicitly derived from empirical research, as researchers bring with them their own worldviews, assumptions, and biases (see section 2.1.1). For example, while empirical evidence may support the significance of the *senpai kōhai* system in Japanese society (see sectional 2.2.1), it should not be concluded that everyone consents to this system, or that this system operates uniformly across Japan or among all individuals or groups. Certainly, the way in which scholarship, as well as the participants in the current inquiry, (re)produce common sense knowledge is an important part of this paper. It is the hope that while the author may in fact draw upon *tan'itsu minzoku shakai* ideology at times, he does not do so unconsciously or uncritically.

2.2.1 Age

At first glance, age may seem to simply signify a natural marker of life passing. However, upon closer inspection, age reveals a socially constructed aspect of identity based on dominant ideologies that dictate privilege and oppression across a lifespan (Allen, 2010). As with other social categories, age and power are inextricably linked. Unlike other social categories, age is experienced universally, and within a given society each individual is subjected to the effects of different phases of the life cycle (Bradley, 1996). Age is measured in years, and people are typically grouped into various "generations" or age brackets for social or analytical purposes. Cultural and religious-based rituals mark significant age-related milestones. For example, in Japan, there is a special word for "20 years old" (*hatachi*), the age of majority, and each year *seijin no shiki* (coming of age ceremonies) are held across the country on a designated national holiday in January.[6] Age-based hierarchy is evident in every aspect of Japanese society. One particular manifestation of this is the *senpai kōhai kankei* (senior-junior relationship), which serves as the basis for interpersonal relationships within many social institutions (see, for example, Sano, 2014 for study of senior-junior relationship dynamic in the context of middle school). In opposition to the *kōhai*, Arai (2004) describes the *senpai* as a "high-status person—in terms of age, knowledge, skill, experience, and so on" (p. 35). As Sakushima and colleagues (2015) explain, in the context of the workplace, in exchange for unquestioned loyalty and hard work, the *senpai* takes on the role of nurturer, guiding the *kōhai* in the customs and behaviours necessary to succeed in the organisation (see also Mishina, 2014). The *senpai kōhai kankei* has been linked to workplace outcomes for employees in Japanese firms, including organisational commitment, job promotions, and turnover intentions (e.g., Cheung et al., 2013). It can be presumed that those older in the organisation enjoy a higher status, salary, and position than those younger (Davies & Ikeno, 2002).Beyond age in a biological sense, age and concomitant hierarchies could also be based on the length of time attending a school, length of time working at a company, and so forth.

Demographically, with life expectancy at birth above 84 years in 2019, Japan is one of the world's longest-lived countries (United Nations, 2019). Japan is categorised as a "super-aged society" (*chōkōreika shakai*); the oldest in the world, with 28.4% of the population aged 65 and over in 2020 (Cabinet Office, 2020).[7] With 51 persons aged 65 years or over per 100 persons aged 20 to 64 years, Japan currently has the highest *old-age dependency ratio* in the world (United Nations, 2019). Additionally, at 1.8, it has the lowest *potential support ratio*—defined as the number of people of working age (25 to 64 years) per person aged 65 years or over. A super-aged society has profound implications for public policy issues including pension, health, welfare, and taxation (Muramatsu & Akiyama, 2011; Kitao, 2018). In turn, policies related to aging have the potential to disturb age role norms. For example, Tsutsui, Muramatsu and Higashino (2014) note that the expectation that children will remain with and support their aging parents has lessened in the wake of a mandatory nationwide long-term care insurance system established in 2000 that made a variety of home, community-based, and institutional services a universal entitlement for every elderly person regardless of economic status (see also Campbell & Ikegami, 2000). Finally, in order to expand the working age population and ease pressure on the social security system, in 2021 the Act on Stablization of Employment of Elderly Persons (1971) was amended, effectively raising the age of retirement from 65 to 70 ("25% of firms heed directive", 2022). A survey conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare found that smaller businesses in particular welcomed this change. In this research, age was conceptualised by the participants as an intergenerational divide between older and younger. A variety of different sentiments crossed this divide, ranging from admiration to disdain. Stereotyping was used to communicate difference: The older generation was "conservative" and "*dasai* (uncool)", while the younger generation was "lucky", making "superficial" online connections. One's age had a bearing on where one was "meant to be" in their life, shaping expectations around marriage, career, and having children, as well as expectations around modes of participating in the LGBT+ community. Age was also linked to understandings of gender and sexuality, and was significant in shaping the ways in which the participants navigated their LGBT+ identities. This coincided with advances in medicine and technology, including the advent of the Internet, which allowed for greater access to LGBT-related information and services. Age was particularly relevant for trans participants, as age enabled or constrained access to gender affirming opportunities, such as receiving hormone therapy, surgery, and changing the gender marker on official documents.

2.2.2 Social Gender

In this text, gender identity (*jiseinin*) is distinguished from social gender (*shakaiteki danjobetsu*). Gender identity is self-definitional, while social gender describes how an individual is perceived and treated based on legal designation as well as presentational cues. In this way, gender identity and social gender may be incongruent. Social gender is predicated on what Herdt (1996) refers to as a “principle of sexual dimorphism”, which upholds that sex and/or gender, everywhere and at all times, exist for reproduction of individuals and species. In this model, biology and gender expression are dichotomous and essentialised. Humans are neatly divided into two categories, enforced by medical, legal, and social systems.[8] However, this model does not reflect the realities of human lived experience, and systematically represses or denies the existence of people who are intersex, as well as people who are trans. Generally, as a social category, social gender has two available identity positions: “woman” and “man”. In most societies and in many contexts, these positions typically do not have relational equivalence. An institutionalised dominance of men over women, in other words, a system of patriarchy is, as asserted by Walby (1989), composed of six main structures: a patriarchal mode of production in which women's labour is expropriated by their husbands; patriarchal relations within waged labour; the patriarchal state; male violence; patriarchal relations in sexuality; and patriarchal culture. Importantly, men have systematic advantages over women whether they desire these advantages or not (Vannoy, 2000).[9] Beyond structural inequalities, gender roles are (re)produced based on implicit understandings of women and men as being fundamentally different. In Japan, this is most clearly articulated by the expressions *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife, wise mother”) and *daikokubashira* (lit. large black pillar; in other words, the main support of the household), underscoring the idea that women and men should serve as both productive and *reproductive* members of society in different ways (Dasgupta, 2005). Structural inequalities and gender-role norms have precipitated in uneven labour force participation.

Koshal and colleagues (2004) characterise Japan as a traditionally “male-centred society”, with laws and policies that kept women in the house where they would take on sole responsibility of child-rearing. Despite attitudes shifting toward valuing a more egalitarian division of labour among women and men (Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, 2020a), as well as the passing of equal opportunity legislation, under-representation of women in political, academic, and business spheres, particularly in positions of power, persists. The discrenpancy between paid and unpaid (e.g., routine housework, care for household members, etc.) labour between women and men in Japan is stark: 272 and 224 minutes per day of paid and unpaid labour respectively for women, and; 452 and 41 minutes per day of paid and unpaid labour respectively for men (weekly average).[10] The way social gender interacted with other categories in this research was complex. Experiences of privilege and oppression were coloured by context. Because the stereotypes of LGBT+ people perpetuated in media are so narrow, most of the participants did not “read” as queer in their daily expression, so much so that the disclosure of their LGBT+ identities were often met with disbelief. For LGBT+ expatriates especially, this engendered a sense of safety as they felt comfortable to express themselves more fully in Japan than they could in their home country. At the same time, regardless of sexuality, inside and outside the workplace, participants who were women faced sexism and the normative violence of men, and they were seen as sexually available, exploitable commodities. Meanwhile, those beyond the gender binary sought legitimacy and citizenship, caught in a liminal space between legal designation and self-actualisation. Throughout this text, “man” and “woman” are treated as analytical categories. These categories do not necessarily represent discrete, stable identities. Rather, the meanings attached to man and woman, as well as to masculinity and femininity, are plural and contextual.

2.2.3 Nationality

Of the social categories introduced here, “nationality” was the most difficult to settle on, and is subsequently the most difficult to unpack. Specifically, while the category of “race/ethnicity” seemed at first to be an appropriate fit for the data, the author felt that this category did not adequately capture the administrative and bureaucratic elements of citizenship that were particularly relevant to the experiences of the LGBT+ expatriate participants in Japan. Further, although certain participants talked about how race or skin colour shaped and essentialised their identities in certain contexts, nationality, not race/ethnicity, seemed to be the more important anchor point in identity formation. Finally, difference was typically communicated through country comparison, bringing country of origin into focus as a central aspect of identity. The modern nation state has its origins in 17th century Europe, following the ratification of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (Hassan, 2006; Okhonmina, 2010). In effect, nation states became sovereign. Subsequent colonisation carved up much of the planet into arbitrary territories based on systems of violence and exploitation. Today, as Wiley (2002) puts it, a nation can be thought of as a "container of society—the space within which social interaction occurs" (p. 79). A nation is taken for granted as a physical realm full of people that, regardless of systems of privilege and oppression, are united by a deep sense of comradeship, what Anderson (2006) refers to as an "imagined community". Japan's own nation-building project was formalised by the promulgation of the *Dai-Nippon Teikoku Kenpō* (The Constitution of the Empire of Japan) in 1889. The incorporation of Hokkaidō (1869), the annexation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom (1879), and the expansion into Korea and China (among other territories) culminated in the formation of a multiethnic empire (Mason, 2012; Akamine, 2016; Hirano et al., 2018; Eskildsen, 2019). In the aftermath of World War II, this empire was swiftly and forcibly dismantled by outside powers, namely the Allied Nations. This rapid decolonisation process by the Allied military forces included the repatriation of over 5 million Japanese nationals to Japan and the deportation of over a million former colonial subjects —Koreans, Taiwanese, Chinese, and others—resulting in the fragmentation of families and communities (Watt, 2010). Today, aftershocks of Imperial Japan resonate throughout the region. Matthews (2020) argues that the reproduction of Japanese national identity continues to be disturbed by the dialectic of recognition and denial of Japan's colonial past.

In Japan, nationality is conferred by *jus sanguinis* (lit. right of blood; i.e., parentage), in contrast to countries such as Australia, where nationality is conferred by *jus soli* (lit. right of the soil; i.e., place of birth). Before 1985, this was limited to patrilineal succession (Shimoji & Ogaya, 2020). In other words, only children with a Japanese father would be granted Japanese citizenship. Further, under the Nationality Act, Article 14 (Ministry of Justice, n.d.), dual citizenship is prohibited, and before the age of 22, a Japanese national who also has a foreign nationality is obligated to renounce one.[11] Taken together, this places a strong legal emphasis on Japaneseness being imbued by a clear, continuous ancestral line. Although foreign nationals are able to acquire Japanese citizenship by process of naturalisation, they still face ideological barriers to full Japaneseness. Sugimoto (1999) asserts that the discourse of Japaneseness evoked in *nihonjinron* operates on the tautological equation of nationality, ethnicity, and culture, and notes that many people who are Japanese "in a liberal sense" do not necessarily satisfy this equation.[12] To be Japanese an individual must perfect, as McNeil (2021) calls it, their "ABCs": *appearing* Japanese; *behaving* Japanese; and *communicating* fluently in Japanese. In reality, many people who are

Japanese by nationality cannot meet all three criteria. For example, someone who is of mixed heritage may behave like a Japanese person and speak Japanese fluently, but not look "Japanese".[13] Similarly, a returnee, who looks Japanese, may not behave "Japanese" or speak Japanese fluently. In this research, participants who were of mixed heritage and/or who were returnee talked about how they were othered; their Japaneseness was conditional. In some contexts, they were considered *gaikokujin* (lit. outside country person). Its abbreviated form, *gaijin*, can be used as a derogatory slur, but many participants used it self-referentially; much like how the word queer has been reclaimed by some in the LGBT+ community. In fact, there were some interesting parallels between queerness and foreignness. The current research found that deploying a foreigner identity was sometimes advantageous. Beyond the ABCs, the participant's nationality had implications for marriage recognition and participation in the labour market. In particular, the experiences of LGBT+ expatriate couples navigating the visa application process revealed structural inequalities.

2.2.4 Marital status

Marital status is unique among the four social categories addressed here in that, to move from one position to another—i.e., from "unmarried" to "married"—requires entering a contract with another person, something which is not equally accessible to all. The act of marriage marks both a legal and a social change in status. In Japanese, this binary is usually rendered as *mikon* and *kikon*. The "mi" in *mikon* implies that the person is "not yet" married, excluding people such as divorcees and widowers who do not fit this narrow definition of unmarried.[14] Because marriage and procreation are highly correlated in Japan—extramarital ("illegitimate") births accounted for 2.29% of total births in 2015 (IPSS, 2017b)—the phenomena of *mikonka* (declining marriage rate), and *bankonka* (increase in average age of marriage), as alluded to in chapter 1 (section 1.1.1), are considered population issues.[15] Consequently, local municipalities across Japan have become increasingly invested in providing *konkatsu*- ("marriage hunting")[16] related programs and services (The Institute for Tokyo Municipal Research, 2019). Dales (2018) observes that underlying tensions in gender norms, shifting notions of femininity and masculinity, and concomitant shifts in economic and political structures over recent years account for the gap between marriage ideal and practice. Indeed, one study that analysed nationally representative data found that less than half of respondents married, despite the large majority of unmarried men and women wanting to marry (Raymo et al., 2021). Among those who remained unmarried, roughly two-thirds were classified as "drifting into singlehood", about 30 per cent as "failing to realize marriage desires", and no more than 5% as "rejecting marriage". Overall, evidence suggests that, despite expectations from government and family, and even from individuals themselves (e.g., Yoshida, 2017), marriage as a ubiquitous and normative relational formation in Japanese society is wavering.

In the current inquiry, this tension between expectation and reality was explored. Marriage was constructed as both a privilege and as a constraint, representing different things for different participants. For some, marriage was a matter of course; common sense. For others, marriage was seen as an unnecessary step in relationship recognition. For others still, marriage symbolised the unobtainable; a promise for the future. As of writing, marriage equality has not been legalised in Japan. Based on Article 24 of the Constitution, marriage in Japanese is defined only as being between man and a woman, although lawyers have formally presented an alternative reading of this article (Japan Federation of Bar Associations, 2019). Moves to legalise same-sex marriage are underway. On the 3rd of June 2019, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, Japanese Communist Party, and the Social Democratic Party submitted a marriage equality bill to the lower house of the Diet (Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, 2019). Meanwhile, several NGOs and legal practitioners are pushing for marriage equality on the legal front, including Marriage for All Japan, Equal Marriage Alliance Japan, Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network. Discourse around *dōseikon* ("same-sex marriage") is increasingly visible in the media, and recent polls suggest that public sentiment toward marriage for same-sex partners is mostly positive. For example, the 2018 Dentsu survey cited in chapter 1 (section 1.2.2) found that 78.4 per cent of people approve of same-sex marriage (Dentsu Inc., 2019). Starting with Shibuya City in 2015, at the local level, same-sex couples can apply for "partnership certificates" in number of jurisdictions.[17] Although not legally binding, recognition of these relationships has implications for how businesses and services cater toward same-sex couples.

2.3 Intersecting dimensions of difference

2.3.1 Comparison across categories

The four social categories discussed above can be seen as highly interdependent. For example, in Japan, marital status intersects with age when there is a societal expectation to get married by a certain age. Marital status intersects with social gender in that marriage is expected to be between a man and a woman at the exclusion of any other configuration as stipulated by the law. Finally, marital status intersects with nationality in that recognition of same-sex marriage is contingent on the nationality of both individuals, again, as stipulated by law. Based on a conceptualisation by Verloo (2006), a comparison of these categories is presented in table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Comparing four social categories in the context of Japan

Representations of social categories in terms of:	**Age**	**Social gender**	**Nationality**	**Marital status**
Range of positions	Multiple [dichotomous]	Dichotomous	Multiple [dichotomous]	Dichotomous
Origin of social category	Nature [legal]	Nature/nurture [legal]	Legal	Legal
Location of privilege and oppression	Mostly organisation of labour [citizenship]	Organisation of labour, intimacy and citizenship	Organisation of citizenship and labour [intimacy]	Mostly organisation of labour [citizenship]
Mechanisms (re)producing privilege and oppression	Material (resources) Discursive (norms)	Material (resources) Discursive (norms) (Sexist) violence	Material (resources) Discursive (norms) (Racist) violence	Material (resources) Discursive (norms)
Norm	Married older [Japanese heterosexual man]	[Married older Japanese] heterosexual man	[Married older] Japanese [heterosexual man]	Married older Japanese heterosexual [man]

Adapted from Verloo, 2006, p. 217.

There are five points of comparison: the range of positions in each category; the common understanding of the origin of the social category; the possible location of privilege and oppression connected to the social category; the possible mechanisms producing privilege and oppression; and the norm against which the social category seems to be compared. As for the first point, "woman" and "man", and "unmarried" and "married" are the two positions most commonly associated with the categories of social gender and marital status respectively. Meanwhile, although technically there are multiple positions available, in the context of this research, both "age" and "nationality" could also be considered dichotomous in terms of positionality. For the category of age, individuals were seen as either "older" or "younger" with a generational divide between them. For nationality, individuals were seen as either "foreigner" or "Japanese". Those who were *hāfu* and/or returnees had recourse to oscillate between these two positions, uniquely accessing privilege and experiencing oppression as both insiders and outsiders. Regarding the point "origin of social category", as already discussed, viewing social categories through a queer theory lens, as well as from a social constructivist perspective, it can be understood that while categories like age and social gender, and even nationality and marital status may seem "natural" and universal, they are in fact social constructs. The way these categories manifest in Japan is historically and culturally dependant. Nationality and marital status, in contrast to age and social gender, have a more evident basis in law.

Turning to the third point of comparison, for age and marital status, location of privilege and oppression mostly resides in the organisation of labour. Marriage (for men at least) can lead to promotions, while *nenkō joretsu* (a system of advancement based on seniority) has traditionally privileged older workers. Age and marriage also connect to citizenship in the way that they regulate people who are not Japanese or those who hold dual citizenship. For social gender, while somewhat of a blurring seems to be taking place, arguably the division of labour between "men" and "women" remains stark. This shapes how people relate to one another in both public and private spaces. Those who are not seen, socially and/or legally, as men or women, namely trans and intersex people, live precariously or else are relegated to specific roles in the entertainment or hospitality economies (Mackie, 2008). Meanwhile, nationality is primarily linked to citizenship and labour, having implications for residency and workforce participation. Nationality also evokes an "us and them" mentality. When analysing how privilege and oppression are (re)produced, the fourth point, material and discursive mechanisms are the most obvious sites of inquiry. In other words, addressing the uneven distribution to resources, including financial, social, and educational resources, as well as who controls formation of knowledge. Additionally, sexist violence and racist violence are powerful (re)producing mechanisms for social gender and nationality respectively. As for the fifth and final point, along with being heterosexual, being married, a man, older, and Japanese can be understood to be the normative position of the dominant and privileged person living in Japan. Notably, this is the same across all four social categories, with slight variation in accent: "older" in age; "man" in social gender; "Japanese" in nationality; and "married" in marital status. However, an important argument of this paper is that privilege and oppression are not experienced uniformly within groups, but are instead dependent on the unique mix of individual identities as well as on context. Social locations position people simultaneously along multiple power axes (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Further, just like recognising that the identity categories of "LGBT+" and "expatriate" do not represent homogeneous groups, it is important not to essentilise the category of "Japanese", as *nihonjiron* discourse typically does. The experience of being Japanese is plural and contextual; it depends on intersections with other dimensions of difference. While it is useful to discern patterns and trends in attitudes and behaviour, the purpose of this research is not to make generalisations about entire populations of people. This is where an intersectional approach to workplace diversity is useful.

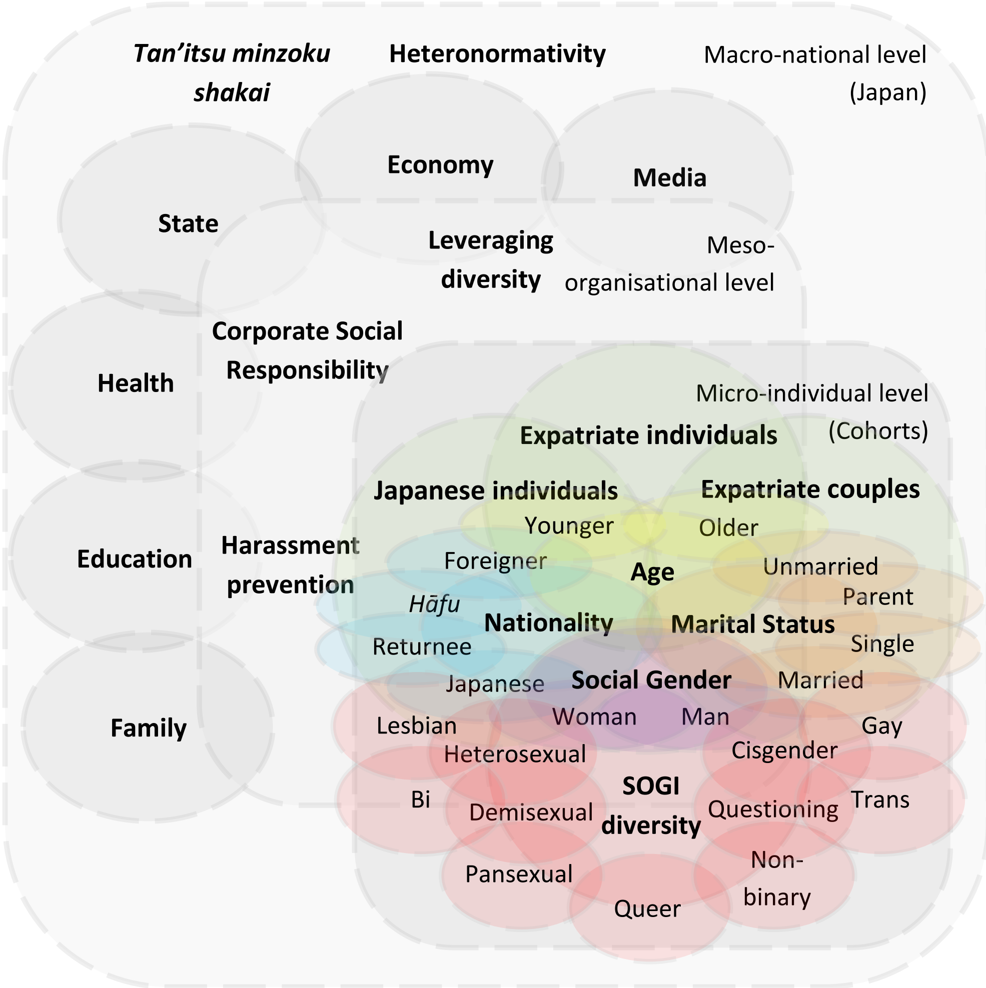
2.3.2 Organising framework

Having articulated the organisation of power relations in chapter 1 (section 1.1.2), and described the four major social categories that intersected with SOGI diversity in this chapter (section 2.2), a multilevel relational framework for workplace diversity in the context of Japan is presented (see figure 2.1). Originally proposed by Syed and Özbilgin (2009) and inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1977) and Layder (1993), the multilevel relational framework for diversity management aims to:

1. Overcome the limitations of mono-cultural, western-centric conceptualisations of diversity management that generally fail to question underlying power relations within a given society by considering country-specific contextual factors;
2. Recognise the interplay between individual, organisational, and structural phenomena within the broader socio-historical context;
3. Bridge the divide between objective and subjective aspects of equality such that the material *and* cultural bases of social relations are revealed, and;
4. Drive attempts to move beyond cosmetic and uneven approaches to equal opportunity by addressing diversity through comprehensive cultural transformation at multiple levels of social reality.

This three-pronged relational framework has seen utility in studies of LGBT employees in countries such as Turkey (Bilgehan Ozturk, 2011) and Taiwan (Achyldurdyyeva and Wu, 2021), and aligns well with the author's epistemological and methodological approaches: that of social constructionism, queer theory, grounded theory, and intersectionality. The layers defined in this framework are irreducibly interdependent and interrelated; hence the term "relational" (Syed & Özbilgin, 2009). At the highest level of abstraction, the macro-national institutions sit within the wider socio-historical context of Japan. In this model, heteronormativity and *tan'itsu minzoku shakai* are representative of the dominant ideologies that feed into these institutions. They do not perfectly encapsulate the experiences of the participants, but are perhaps the most pervasive and least questioned ideologies operating within Japanese society. Other ideologies, such as nationalism, racism, ableism, sexism, and organising structures such as patriarchy and gender hegemony, were either explicitly or implicitly alluded to during the interviews and in the short-answer survey. Ettlinger (2001) contends that the transformation of the extant system of power relations in the workplace cannot be divorced from the broader macro-level factors. The institutions most relevant to the research were family, education, health, state, economy, and media. These are the physical and figurative locations within which power relations are (re)produced on a daily basis. In chapter 5 (section 5.3), these institutions are discussed in relation

Figure 2.1 Multilevel relational framework for workplace diversity in Japan



Adapted from Syed and Özbilgin, 2009, p. 2446.

to the discourses and structures that perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression, which in turn shape the experiences of individuals living and working in Japan who are LGBT+ and/or expatriates.

The next level down is the meso-organisational level of analysis, which is studied through an assessment of organisational approaches to diversity management (Syed & Özbilgin, 2009). A relational perspective sees organisational actions toward diversity management as a reflection of wider social attitudes toward diverse groups. As such, the workplace perspectives and experiences of those who are of the nondominant groups tend to remain ignored as the organisational culture is produced by and continues to favour the preferences of the dominant groups. Chapter 6 explores the scope of diversity management practice in Japan, and the ways in which LGBT+ employees in particular are beginning to be integrated into systems of knowledge and support. First, it was found that companies defined diversity management as a strategy to leverage the skills of a diverse work force, and that they located diversity in both surface-level (attributes) and deep-level (values and ways of thinking) dimensions; a business case for diversity rhetoric was deployed. In practice, “gender” seemed to be the most important dimension of diversity, with initiatives and policies aimed at increasing women’s participation in the workforce being particularly prevelant. Second, in line with changes to labour laws, along with having systems and tracking in place for the promotion of women in positions of leadership and the hiring of people with disabilities, harassment prevention measures, including education, had become a part of corporate compliance. Third, companies had aligned diversity management with corporate social responsibility and, in particular, with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. To an extent, companies felt pressure to adapt to social trends. Keidanren, an economic organisation, as well as international standards and comittments, such as the Olympic Charter and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, were understood to be important in shaping and guiding diversity management practice in Japan. Finally, in this framework, the three LGBT+ cohorts—Japanese individuals, expatriate individuals, and expatriate couples—are at the lowest level of abstraction, constituting the micro-individual level of analysis. Individual identity was the main unit of analysis in this research, and, as such, the majority of this paper was dedicated to understanding how power relations were discursively reproduced through daily interactions, as well as the varying levels of privilege and oppression the LGBT+ employees experienced. In line with Syed & Özbilgin (2009), this research sees individuals as agentic and resourceful with fluid identities rather than as reactive and rational with fixed identities. At the micro-individual level of analysis, a person’s multiple and intersecting identities, as well as their subjective experiences within societal and employment contexts because of these identities, are examined. Importantly, in spite of macro- and meso-level influences, including negative social and organisational stereotyping, each individual possesses unique resources and agency to deal with external challenges, from both within and outside the workplace.

Further, throughout this research individuals are conceptualised as belonging to multiple dominant and nondominant groups simultaneously. The way an individual is viewed and, indeed, the way they view themselves, depends on context. The five social categories—SOGI diversity, age, social gender, nationality, and marital status—along with their concomitant identity positions, are represented by interlocking ovals with dashed outlines. In fact, all of the outlines in this model are made up of broken lines, signalling the fragility and fluidity of the categories themselves. These social categories, or what Ridgeway (2006) calls *social difference codes*, may be understood as the “widely shared cultural beliefs that delineate the socially significant distinctions among people on the basis of which a society is structured and inequality is organised” (p. 180). As with the ideologies mentioned, the identities (e.g., “questioning”, “unmarried”, “foreigner”) explicated in this framework are not intended to represent an exhaustive list of possible subject positions. Instead, they represent the most salient categories to come out of the data, based on the lived experiences of the participants. The author notes that the social phenomena analysed here are far too complex and nuanced to adequately describe in a single framework. The multilevel relational framework for workplace diversity in Japan offers an opportunity to deconstruct and problematise some of the underlying mechanisms that drive social processes. Rather than merely analysing individual attitudes and behaviours at the micro-level, by understanding how socially and historically embedded macro-level institutional processes play out at the meso-level locations of daily organisational life, solutions for more systemic, cultural change can be extrapolated.

Notes

1. *Reflexivity* involves the process of self-reflection on the part of the researcher and the subsequent acknowledgment—usually explicitly in the text—of the biases, values, and experiences the researcher has going into the study (Creswell, 2007).
2. Mega-regions are defined by Florida (2019) as “areas of continuous light that contain at least two existing metro areas, have populations of five million or more, and generate economic output of more than US$300 billion”.
3. Data on mega-regions presented in the report were sourced from Florida (2019).
4. By frequency, China, South Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Nepal, Taiwan, the United States, India, Myanmar, and Thailand are the top 10 countries (of origin) as indicated by foreign residents on their residency card, altogether representing about 86 per cent of the total foreigner population in the 23-*ku* area (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2022c).
5. Othering, a theoretical concept coined by Gayatri Spivak (1985), describes a multidimensional process of social differentiation in which the “dominant group” defines and positions the “subordinate group” as morally and/or intellectually inferior (Schwalbe et al. 2000; Jensen, 2011).
6. On the April 1st 2022, the age of majority was lowered to 18 (“Official age of Adulthood”, 2022). In effect, this means that 18 is the age at which a person may enter a contract on their own and is no longer subject to parental authority. However, other rights, such as drinking alcohol, smoking, and enrolling in the national pension, remain restricted to those aged 20 and above.
7. A super-aged society is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a society with more than 21% of their total population aged 65 years and older (Okamura, 2016; see also D'Ambrogio, 2020).
8. This model is not universal. Within many cultures and populations throughout history people beyond the binary of “man” and “woman” have existed: the *māhū* of Hawaiʻi; the *kathoey* of Thailand, and; the *mashoga* of Kenya and Tanzania are examples (Fogart & Zheng, 2018). More recently, gender beyond the binary has gained recognition in national law. In India, a “third gender” status was created for people who are trans or *hijra* (Mahapatra, 2014).

9. This is not to suggest the universality of patriarchy across time and space, or that "women" share a unified sense of oppression. As Butler (1990/2006) writes: "The notion of universal patriarchy has been widely criticized in recent years for its failure to account for the workings of gender oppression in the concrete cultural contexts in which it exists" (p. 5). See also Patil (2013) for an overview of the major critiques of the use of the term "patriarchy" in scholarship; she concludes that patriarchies are multiple, contextual, and intersectional.
10. The data showed that men in Japan had the longest average amount of paid work among the OECD countries, with paid working hours accounting for 92 per cent of total working hours, compared with approximately 65-70 per cent in Sweden and Canada. Men and women in Japan also had the longest total working hours combining paid and unpaid labour among the OECD countries (women = 496 minutes per day; men = 493 minutes per day). The data were sourced from OECD (2020), "Balancing paid work, unpaid work and leisure" and compiled in White Paper on Gender Equality 2020: Summary (Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, 2020a).
11. Using Democratic Party member (Saitō) Renhō as a case study, Törngren & Okamura (2017) note the tension between *de jure* intolerance and *de facto* tolerance in relation to dual citizenship in Japan. In other words, while holding dual citizenship after the age of 22 is provisionally not allowed in Japan, actual compliance is not necessarily evenly enforced. In 2016, Renhō came under fire after failing to complete the process of resolving her formal dual citizenship status. Subsequently, other politicians came under scrutiny (see also Shimoji & Ogaya, 2020).
12. More recently, Sugimoto argues that: "The view that Japan is a monocultural society with little internal cultural divergence and stratification, which was once taken for granted, is now losing monopoly over the way Japanese society is portrayed" (2010, 1).
13. The appearance of a "Japanese" person is reified in the Kōjien dictionary. The definition for *nihonjin* has two entries. The first refers to a person who holds Japanese nationality; a "Japanese citizen" (*Nihon kokumin*). The second entry describes Japanese anthropologically as follows: "One of the mongoloid race. Has yellow skin, blackish-brown eyes, and straight black hair. Language is Japanese" (Kōjien, n.d., p. 15037).
14. On some forms, "Marital status" is expressed as *haigusha no umu* (lit. presence or absence of spouse) with a binary "yes" or "no" response available.
15. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2018), the percentage of lifetime non-marriages in Japan reached 23.4 per cent for males and 14.1 per cent for females in 2015, the highest percentage ever. Apart from a slight resurgence in the 1980s, since the marriage boom of the 1970s, the marriage rate in Japan has seen a general and continuous decline.
16. The word *konkatsu* is an abbreviation of *kekkon katsudō*, and was coined in 2007 by sociologist Yamada Masahiro and journalist Shirakawa Momoko (Dalton & Dales, 2016).
17. For more detailed information, see: <https://www.city.shibuya.tokyo.jp/kusei/shisaku/lgbt/partnership.html>

Chapter 3 – Management and organisation studies and LGBT+ subjectivities

While SOGI diversity remains the least studied facet of diversity, there is a growing body of work dedicated to understanding the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals. Like feminism, this research has been conceptualised as occurring in waves, beginning in the late 1970s (Colgan and Rumens, 2015). Although multidisciplinary in scope, like the field of diversity management, researching LGBT+ subjectivities in management and organisation studies (MOS) has been exemplified by a lack of different perspectives. A systematic literature review of 52 scholarly articles on sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace found that most research was conducted in U.S. or UK work settings (Ozeren, 2014). More generally, of 61 papers on diversity training programme outcomes reviewed by Alhejji et al. (2015), few of the authors were from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and mainland Europe. They also found that it was uncommon for authors to work with data from outside their country. Similarly, a systematic review of quantitative, qualitative and theoretical diversity management studies published in leading peer-reviewed management journals from 1991 to 2018 yielded 123 articles published in 17 countries: Eighty (65%) of the papers were from the USA; 25 per cent were from Canada (8 papers), the Netherlands (7 papers), the UK (7 papers), Australia (5 papers), India (3 papers), Ireland (2 papers), and Germany (2 papers); with just one paper each, the remaining countries represented were China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Jonsen et al. (2011) suggest that because diversity research is itself not diverse, especially with respect to cultural assumptions, it is unhelpful to diversity practice. More recently, attempts to broaden the base have been made. In 2016, *Sexual orientation and transgender Issues in organisations: Global perspectives on LGBT workforce diversity* (Ed. Köllen) was published. Several countries, including Chile, India, and Spain, are represented in empirical studies conducted by contributing authors. Similarly, *Sexual orientation at work: Contemporary Issues and Perspectives* (Eds. Colgan & Rumens, 2015) includes studies conducted in Australia, Turkey, and South Africa. Taking a cue from these works, the intent of the review below is to present a multi-country perspective on LGBT+ workplace experiences, paying close attention to the particular sociocultural and historical factors that shape the research findings. Rather than provide a narrative overview of the past 40 years of research into LGBT+ subjectivities in the MOS literature, here the research streams relating to identity management, discrimination, and organisational support will be the focus.

3.1 Stigma theory and identity management

3.1.1 Conceptualising stigma

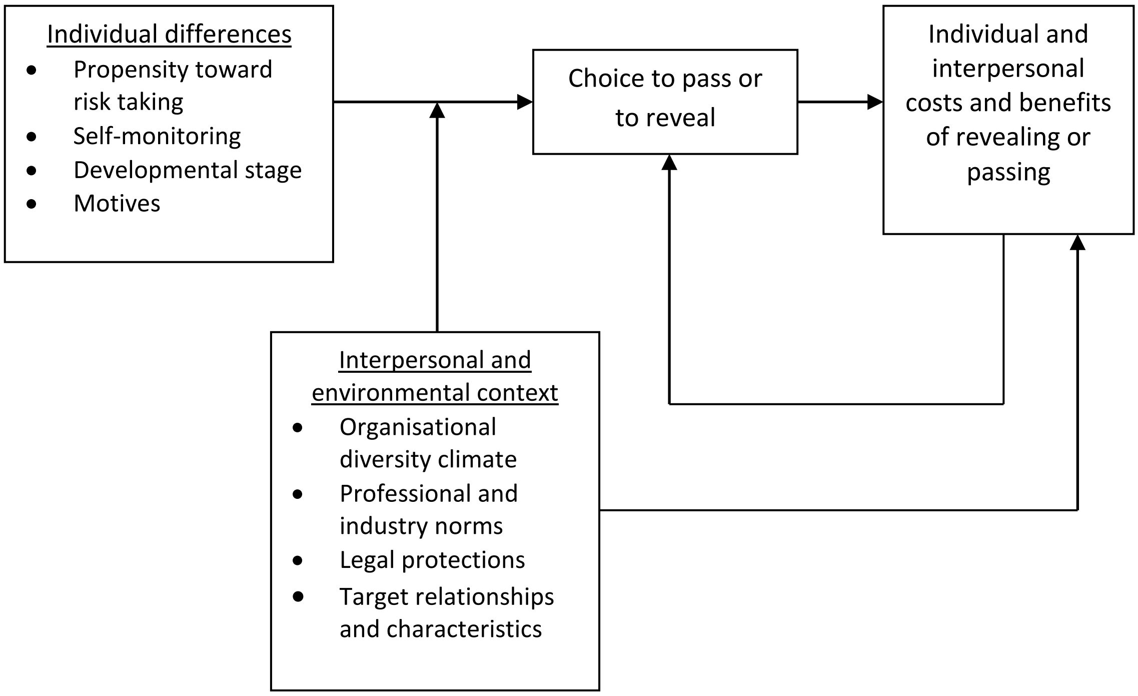
As discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.1.1), SOGI diversity can be understood as invisible diversity (Ward, 2008). This is because when interacting with someone new, regardless of presentational cues, their sexual orientation and/or gender identity are not readily communicated. Even after developing a relationship, societal norms and values may create an environment that silences, erases, and even actively condemns discourse around sexuality and gender. Breaking this silence has become an important narrative for many LGBT+ people. "Coming out (of the closet)" is a mixed metaphor (see Scott, 2018 for origin of the term) that may be defined thusly: "Becoming aware of one's sexual orientation or gender identity and beginning to disclose it to others. A person may be selectively 'out' in some situations or to certain people without generally disclosing his or her sexual orientation or gender identity. 'Coming out' is a process that takes place over time, in some cases over many years" (Bochenek & Brown, 2001, p. xiii). Shogo, one of the Study 1 interviewees, reflected on his time living in Australia, noting the way that the "coming out story" could be framed as a kind of grand revelation worthy of celebration. It may be a political act, or simply a declaration of self; coming out means different things to different people. Equally, for many people and for many reasons, coming out may not be an appropriate decision for them. The decision, either consciously or otherwise, to remain in the closet, as it were, could be related to stigma. In his book, *Stigma: Notes on management of spoiled identity*, Goffman (1963/1990) conceptualises stigma as a social process in which stigma, defined as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (p. 13), reduces the stigmatised individual "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (p. 12). Goffman observes that an attribute is not creditable or discreditable as a thing in itself. As such, stigma is considered not to reside in the person but rather in the social context, and what is stigmatising in one social context may not be stigmatising in another (Crocker et al., 1998; Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). In this way, an entire group of people can be stigmatised, with stereotypes perpetuating an image of what the stigma entails (e.g., people living with HIV are dangerous, promiscuous, and are in poor health).

Stigmatisation occurs on societal, interpersonal, and individual levels. Pryor and Reeder (2011) present a model that depicts four dynamically interrelated manifestations of stigma: public stigma; self-stigma; stigma by association; and structural stigma. At the core of the model, public stigma represents people's social and psychological reactions to someone they perceive to have a stigmatised condition, and comprises the cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions of those who stigmatise. Negative reactions toward LGBT+ people are generally characterised as *phobia* (i.e., homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia), and population-based attitudes toward bisexual, lesbian, and gay people (Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Steffens & Wagner, 2004; Ahmad & Bhugra, 2010), trans people (King et al., 2009; Konopka et al., 2020), as well as non-binary[1]/genderqueer[2] people (Worthen, 2021), have been empirically measured. Reflecting the social and psychological impact of possessing a stigma, self-stigma includes both the apprehension of being exposed to stigmatisation and the potential internalisation of the negative beliefs and feelings associated with the stigmatised condition (Pryor and Reeder, 2011). For LGBT+ individuals, these negative beliefs could manifest as internalised homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia. The third type of stigma, stigma by association, is analogous to Goffman's (1963/1990) *courtesy stigma* and entails social and psychological reactions to people associated with a stigmatised person (e.g., family and friends) as well as people's reactions to being associated with a stigmatised person (Pryor and Reeder, 2011). Finally, structural stigma is defined as the "legitimatization and perpetuation of a stigmatized status by society's institutions and ideological systems" (Pryor & Reeder, 2011, p. 4). In societies where the ideologies of heteronormativity and cisnormativity are reproduced daily, heterosexuality and cisgender are constructed as "normal" and "natural", while all other sexualities and genders are considered abnormal. Taken together, this model helps in understanding how the process of stigmatisation is experienced by the stigmatised individual themselves, by those associated with the stigmatised individual, and by those who perceive the stigma.

3.1.2 Operationalising disclosure

Along with outlining the social mechanisms of stigma, Goffman (1963/1990) also writes at length about how those who are stigmatised manage their differentness, particularly when that differentness is not immediately apparent. To avoid becoming the discreditable, information management becomes the preoccupation: "To display or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to let on or to not let on; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how, when, and where" (Goffman, 1963/1990, p. 57). Webster et al. (2017) cite two models of particular prominence that are based on Goffman's stigma theory: the Interpersonal Disclosure Decision Model (Clair et al., 2005) and the Home-Work Disclosure Model (Ragins, 2008). Disclosure of an invisible stigma represents the primary variable in both models. In the Interpersonal Disclosure Decision Model

Figure 3.1 Interpersonal diversity disclosure model



Source: Clair et al., 2005, p. 85.

(see figure 3.1), Clair et al. (2005) operationalise disclosure as the "choice to pass or to reveal". Passing is defined by Leary (1999) as "a cultural performance whereby one member of a defined social group masquerades as another in order to enjoy the privileges afforded to the dominant group" (p. 85). For LGB people, passing as straight can confer privilege in certain contexts, while passing privilege for trans people occurs when they are able to pass as a binary gender, that is, they are perceived as cisgender. As Fogarty and Zheng (2018) observe, for trans people, "passing privilege can exist not only when an individual passes "successfully" as the gender they identify as, but also when an individual passes as the gender they were assigned at birth" (p. 128). For LGBT+ individuals, passing amounts to successfully performing, in a Butlerian sense, as a heterosexual and/or cisgender person. In the context of the U.S. military, Herek (1996) identified three distinct passing tactics—namely fabrication, concealment, and discretion—LG individuals may employ. Briefly, *fabrication* involves deliberately providing false information, *concealment* involves actively preventing others from acquiring information, and *discretion* involves avoiding situations where information could be shared. Any combination of these tactics may be used, and different tactics may be more or less successful in different contexts. Similarly, Clair et al. (2005) introduce three revealing tactics people with invisible stigmas may employ in the workplace: signalling, normalising, and differentiating. These approaches can be summarised thusly:

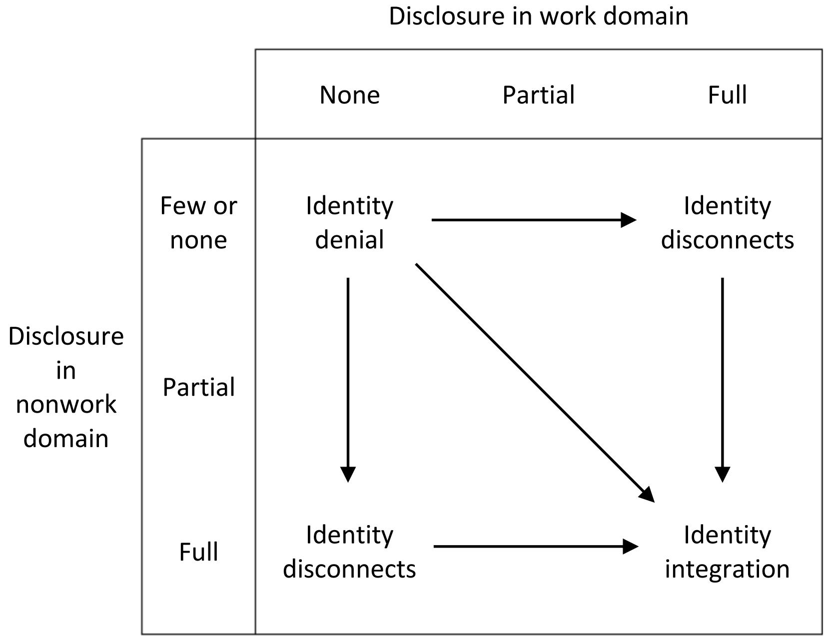
1. Signalling: Use subtle hints, ambiguous language, and “insider” clues (e.g., a rainbow flag pin) that relate to stigmatised social identity. Can be an interim step to access whether it is safe to reveal more;
2. Normalising: Attempt to assimilate into organisational culture. Stigmatised social identity is subtly acknowledged and minimised; and
3. Differentiating: Highlight difference and attempt to reclaim and redefine how stigmatised social identity is understood. May drive cultural change.

Again, different tactics may be more or less successful depending on the context. In the workplace, contextual conditions and individual differences constitute the antecedents to passing and revealing (Clair et al., 2005). Contextual conditions consist of organisational context, industry and professional norms, legal protections, and interpersonal context, that is, the relationship between the person with the invisible dimension of diversity and the person who is the target of the passing or revealing behaviours. Meanwhile, risk-taking propensity, self-monitoring tendencies—i.e., the extent to which an individual acts in a manner consistent with social expectations—level of outness in other contexts, and personal motives, including maintaining relationships and self-esteem, constitute individual differences. Finally, in their model (figure 3.1), Clair et al. (2005) include a feedback loop, and suggest that the outcomes from choosing to reveal will inform future decisions—i.e., positive outcomes will increase the likelihood that the individual will employ revealing tactics in the future, while negative outcomes will increase the likelihood that the individual will employ passing tactics in the future.

In the Home-Work Disclosure Model, Ragins (2008) argues that three antecedent variables combine to affect an individual’s decision to disclose their invisible stigma in work and nonwork domains: the individual’s internal psychological processes; the anticipated consequences of disclosure; and the environmental support received for disclosure. As for the first antecedent, self-verification theory and the concept of identity centrality are cited as important determinants of the disclosure decision. Self-verification theory, as proposed by Swann (1983, 2011), holds that people prefer to have others see them as they see themselves. Therefore, individuals are motivated to challenge misconstrued understandings of their identity. However, Ragins (2008) argues that this motivation is mediated by the centrality of the stigma to their self-concept. Specifically, if the stigma is peripheral to the individual’s self-concept, they may not feel the need to verify their stigmatised identity. Regarding the second antecedent, a cost-benefit analysis of the consequences of disclosure may yield both positive and negative anticipated consequences. Positive consequences include a sense of relief, improved relationships, and role congruence across life domains, while negative consequences include discrimination, job loss, rejection, and violence. Importantly, fear of anticipated negative reactions to disclosure may be sufficient to affect disclosure decisions, as studies of LGB populations have found (e.g., Merchant et al., 2005; Ragins et al., 2007). Additionally, anticipated consequences of disclosure are affected by the characteristics of the stigma itself, including controllability, threat, disruptiveness, and course (i.e., how the stigma changes over time; Ragins, 2008). Regarding controllability, U.S.-based research suggests that individuals who are perceived as being responsible for their stigma are more likely to experience negative attitudes and behaviours than those whose stigma is viewed as beyond their control (Weiner et al., 1998; Rodin et al., 1989; Crocker et al., 1998). For example, in their research on job applicants that were either physically disabled or obese, Hebl & Kleck (2002) found that acknowledging a controllable stigma was viewed as a liability, and it was considered to be more inappropriate than acknowledging an uncontrollable stigma. Being obese is usually seen as within someone's control and a moral judgement, even if only subconsciously, is attached; being "fat" becomes a mark against that person's character. In the case of SOGI diversity and stigma, an attempt to move the stigma from something that is a (selfish) choice to something that is out of the individual's control has been established through discourse that aligns homosexuality and transness with biological factors such as genetics (i.e., the "gay gene"; see for example Hegarty, 2002; Dar-Nimrod & Heine, 2011). However, it could be argued that this "born this way" narrative is as legitimising as it is pathologising. On the one hand, "abnormal" genders and sexualities are allotted a biological imperative backed by scientific data that can be used to push for rights and access to health care for LGBT+ people. On the other hand, homosexuality and/or transness at best become innate, essentialised traits that a certain portion of the population has to "manage" like a chronic illness, and at worst become something "wrong" with a subset of the population that needs to be systematically "cured" or "fixed" (i.e., eugenics). On narratives explaining the trans experience, Fogarty and Zheng (2018) note: "The prevalence of the 'wrong body discourse' … legitimises a framing of gender transition as a necessary correction to a psychological error, rather than a wilful and agentic decision" (p. 88). The pathologisation of trans people in the context of Japan will be explored further in chapter 5 (section 5.2.2).

Finally, the third antecedent, environmental support, comprises of three specific types of support: social, instrumental, and symbolic. Social and instrumental support may be provided by relationships with similarly stigmatised Others as well as by allies who do not have the stigmatised identity but nonetheless advocate on behalf of the stigmatised Other. Meanwhile, instrumental and/or symbolic support may be provided by the organisation itself. Symbolic support involves

Figure 3.2 Identity states associated with disclosure across life domains



Source: Ragins, 2008, p. 208.

the display of symbols that support and validate the stigmatised group, while instrumental support involves development and enforcement of policies and practices that create an inclusive environment. Along with the Home-Work Disclosure Model, Ragins (2008) also examines the congruousness of disclosure across different life domains. Specifically, work and nonwork domains are positioned on axes with zero disclosure at one end of the continuum ("identity denial") and full disclosure at the other ("identity integration"; see figure 3.2). *Identity disconnects* represents an in-between state in which an individual may have completely disclosed their stigmatised identity in one life domain but not in the other, thus experiencing varying degrees of incongruence. Along with the potential to cause psychological anxiety and stress, Ragins (2008) contends that a key outcome of partial disclosure is that it creates ambiguity around understanding treatment by others; highlighted here as one of the unique challenges faced by individuals with invisible stigmas is the lack of control over the disclosure process itself. For example, disclosing information to a coworker does not preclude the possibility that that coworker will go on to tell, for example, a supervisor, thus *outing* the stigmatised individual.[3]

3.1.3 The complexities of coming out

In the research on the disclosure decision of LGBT+ individuals, the above conceptualisations are important as they position coming out not as a binary decision, but as a location that is constantly negotiated, such that one can simultaneously be out in some situations, and closeted (i.e., not out) in others. Drawing on findings from the current inquiry, this differentiated level of outness across work and nonwork life domains is elaborated upon in chapter 8 (section 8.1.1). Studies have typically linked concealing a stigma with negative psychological outcomes (e.g., Smart & Wegner, 1999; Pachankis, 2007). Conversely, for LGB employees, openness has been linked with decreases in depression, distraction, exhaustion, stress, and anxiety at work (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Sandfort et al., 2006; Badgett et al., 2013), as well as higher job satisfaction and affective organisational commitment (Day & Schoenrade, 1997), suggesting that coming out is the "healthiest" option. Meanwhile, research outside North American and European sociocultural contexts has called for more nuanced understandings of the disclosure decision, problematizing the "universality" of the coming out narrative. For example, Mitra and Doctor (2016) investigated the passing strategies of gay men in India. Rather than framing passing as passive or counterproductive, their research highlighted how passing could be a form of resistance against broader discourses of heteronormativity, patriarchy, and professionalism in the workplace. Similarly, rather than simply following a "closeted is bad"/"out is good" dichotomy, the current inquiry revealed that LGBT+ utilise a range of disclosure strategies in their daily lives. Specifically, it illuminated how non-disclosure aided in maintaining relationships in both work and nonwork domains: "thinking of others" was found to be a significant factor in the disclosure decision process. In his critique of medical and health scholarship, Scott (2018) is critical of careless use of the "coming out" metaphor, including in LGBT+ scholarship, which may reduce coming out to a depoliticized visibility without larger goals of social change. He argues for an understanding of coming out that evokes more than mere self-affirmation, one that incorporates its complexity and origins. Further, rather than simply reaching for the metaphor as convenient shorthand, he advocates for an approach in which the researcher reflects the communicative processes described by LGBT+ individuals, using their own words to frame their experiences. The complexities of coming out in the context of Japan are articulated in chapter 5.

It is also important to point out that many of the identity management strategies, as well as the antecedents and consequences of disclosure important to the experiences of lesbian, gay, and bi people, may not be as relevant or applicable to the experiences of trans people. This is because, unlike information about sexual orientation, which can potentially be hidden indefinitely, there may be situations where information about gender identity is inadvertently "leaked". Transitioning may be one such instance where the invisible becomes visible. In this paper, any action taken, whether short-term or sustained, that affirms gender may be considered part of the transitioning process. These actions can range from hormone replacement therapies (HRTs) and/or surgeries, to legally changing gender and/or name. Transitioning is a deeply personal journey and as such there is no one right way to transition. For the individual it may be a lifelong endeavour, or involve just a few changes. Making changes could mean an adjustment to identity management strategies. For example, in the workplace, disclosure may be necessary when requesting time off for surgery and recovery, or indirect disclosure may occur when expressing gender through clothing, hair, and/or makeup choices. Regarding the later example, one U.S.-based study found that some respondents could be considered “visual nonconformers”, that is, their identity as a trans person could be discerned without direct disclosure (Brower, 2016). Transitioning has been conceptualised as comprising of three non-discrete phases: pre-transition; during transition; and post-transition (Mennicke & Cutler-Seeber, 2016). For example, Budge et al. (2010) describe a three phase linear model of the work transition process in the context of the United States. In the pre-transition phrase, participants had come out to at least one person in their personal lives, and were negotiating affective and coping mechanisms related to the anticipation of coming out at work. In the “during the transition” stage, participants first disclosed to close coworkers, supervisors, or the HR department, a process that involved discussions of options related to expressing gender identity and timing of the first presentation at work. Relief and joy were related to affective experiences, and coping mechanisms depended on the types of workplace reactions. Finally, in the post-transition phase, having navigated their first coming out experience at work, participants continued to present in a way that aligned with their gender identity. When seeking new employment or meeting new people, subsequent coming out experiences evoked new affective and coping mechanisms related to comparisons of how participants were treated based on the changes made to their presentation.

Antecedents and consequences of disclosure may differ not only between LGB and T populations, but also within the trans population. For example, Law et al. (2011) found an exceptional discrepancy in experiences of their research participants, with trans men reporting more favourable coworker reactions than trans women. They speculated that this was because gender violations for men (trans women) are stigmatized more harshly than for women (trans men). Other studies have also described the link between transitioning and gender-based differential treatment (Griggs, 1998; Schilt & Connell, 2007; Fogarty & Zheng, 2018). Importantly, transitioning does not necessarily mean moving from one gender to another in a binary system. Non-binary people, for instance, may express their gender androgynously, while genderfluid people may experience different genders frequently (e.g., from day to day). This also means that their positionality in terms of the social category of gender may be unfixed, which has implications for access to privilege. Ultimately, while transitioning may involve some form of disclosure, workplace visibility is not something that all trans people have to manage at all times, and research has clearly demonstrated that trans people do not necessarily want to or need to disclose information about their SOGI diversity in workplace settings (e.g., Jones, 2016). A strategy of non-disclosure for trans people is sometimes referred to as "going stealth" (e.g., Davis, 2009; Beauchamp, 2009, 2019), and *deep stealth* describes a situation in which a trans individual is stealth to essentially every person they know across all life domains (Fogarty & Zheng, 2018). Recognising SOGI diversity as an (in)visible and stigmatised dimension of difference, the current inquiry extends this research by documenting the various identity management strategies LGBT+ individuals employ in the context of Japan.

3.2 Microaggressions and workplace discrimination

3.2.1 Formal discrimination

Discrimination based on SOGI diversity is wide-spread and deep-rooted. Historical and ongoing pathologisation[4] of "homosexuality" and trans and intersex people has resulted in the justification of human rights violations (United Nations, 2016). Laws implicitly protect and privilege people who are heterosexual and cisgender, affording them the freedom to have relations with and/or marry whomever they want, to access the medical care they need, and to pursue a dignified and authentic life without the need to justify their existence. Meanwhile, individuals who are intersex and those with variations of sex characteristics have had, and continue to, be subjected to non-consensual and medically unnecessary surgeries (Human Rights Watch, 2017; Monro et al., 2019). In many countries, including Japan, a mental health diagnosis, sterilisation, and divorce (if already married) are required for trans people to legally change their name and gender (Chiam et al., 2020; Teshima et al., 2021; Transgender Europe, 2021). Consensual same-sex sexual conduct remains criminalised 67 UN Member States (Mendos et al., 2020). While international activism and the development of standards such as the Yogyakarta Principles (2006, 2017) have precipitated in legislation to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics, harassment, violence, hate crimes, and exclusionary behaviour toward LGBT+ people persist.[5] This discrimination extends to the workplace, and research has begun to measure, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the various forms of discrimination LGBT+ employees face as well as the effects. Discrimination may be classified as either *formal* or *informal* (Levine & Leonard, 1984). A national survey conducted in

Australia found that 10.3 per cent of participants had been refused employment or denied a promotion based on their sexuality (Pitts, et al., 2006). This is an example of formal discrimination, defined as "institutionalized procedures to restrict officially conferred work rewards'' (Levine & Leonard, 1984, p. 706).

Research on formal discrimination of LGBT+ employees has been conducted in relation to benefits (Workplace Pride, 2019; Human Rights Campaign [HRC] Foundation, 2021), hiring (Weichselbaumer, 2003; Ahmed et al., 2013; Luiggi-Hernández et al., 2015), promotion (Badgett et al., 2007; Lau & Stotzer, 2011) and remuneration practices (Badgett 1995; Clain & Leppel, 2001; Carpenter, 2008). In terms of benefits, in a survey of 38 companies, 17 of which operated in all world regions, "support & benefits" received the lowest median score (30.0%) across the seven sections of the 2019 Global Benchmark results, consistent with results from previous years (Workplace Pride, 2019).[6] The "support & benefits" section measured support and workplace safety for LGBT-employees, coming-out/transition support, and (equal) benefits for LGBT employees and their families (Workplace Pride, 2018). In the Corporate Equality Index (CIE), the HRC Foundation (2021) evaluated employers on the provision of health insurance coverage for same- and different-sex spouses and partners, as well as the availability of routine, chronic care and transition-related medical coverage for transgender employees and dependents.[7] Results indicated that 78 per cent of CIE participants provided partner benefits, and 91 per cent offered at least one trans inclusive coverage option. Of those companies that did offer healthcare benefits, 44 per cent extended domestic partner benefits and 26 per cent extended trans-inclusive benefits across all their global operations. As global labour mobility increases, recognising this disparity is important as it has implications for LGBT+ expatriates in general and LGBT+ expatriate couples in particular. An LGBT+ employee at a firm may have access to a suite of benefits in their home country, but after intra-company expatriation those same benefits may no longer be available to them or their family because of their SOGI diversity.

Regarding discrimination in hiring practices, audit or correspondence studies (see Baert, 2018 for review) in several countries including Greece (Drydakis, 2009), Italy (Patacchini et al., 2015), and the United States (Tilcsik, 2011) have demonstrated a positive relationship between communicating sexual orientation and diminished job prospects. For example, in a study conducted in Austria, in response to 613 job openings, Weichselbaumer (2003) sent out a total of 1226 differentially coded applications. Results indicated that representation of a lesbian identity through participation in the "Viennese Gay People's Alliance" reduced the interview offer rate by 12 to 13 per cent. However, the experimental nature of these studies may not reflect the realities of job-seeking processes. Cech and Rothwell (2020) observe that, while innovative, audit studies are designed such that LGBT+ identities are signalled in more obvious ways than typically occurs in regular workplace interactions. Discrimination in job-seeking has also been measured using self-report instruments. In a survey of 82 participants in Puerto Rico, 12 per cent of participants were told or found out they were not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Luiggi-Hernández et al., 2015). Hiring and promotion discrimination is especially prevalent among trans people (Fundamental Rights Agency, 2014; James et al., 2016; Valfort, 2017). The transition process may impact the ability of trans people to gain and maintain employment. For example, their name and/or gender expression may be different in former work experience or educational attainment, and records or references may communicate information at odds with current presentation (Pepper & Lorah, 2008; Scott et al., 2011). Consequently, they either proceed with a gap in employment/education history, limiting their employability, or otherwise put themselves at risk of discrimination. Trans and intersex participants in a public consultation conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission (2011) described being told by their employer that they were no longer suitable for the job role they were hired for after their sex and/or gender identity had been revealed. In a survey of 27,715 trans people in the U.S., twenty-seven per cent of participants reported being fired, not hired, or denied a promotion because of their gender identity or expression (James et al., 2016).

Two theoretical models may explain the occurrence of discrimination against LGBT+ in the labour market: the model of taste-based discrimination (Becker, 1957); and the model of statistical discrimination (Arrow, 1973). The former implies that discrimination is driven by the negative attitudes (i.e., homophobia, biphobia, transphobia) towards LGBT+ people being internalised by employers, which, in turn, might lead employers to harbour distaste towards interacting with them. The latter implies that discrimination towards LGBT+ individuals is driven by assumptions and stereotypes regarding their productivity. As stressed by Ahmed et al. (2013), gay men are stereotypically depicted as being feminine and lesbian women as masculine. The lack of congruence between their assumed traits, which do not conform to typical gender-role stereotypes, and the presumed requirements of the job, may produce barriers to entry when gay men apply for jobs in male-dominated occupations and lesbians in female-dominated occupations. In a field experiment, Drydakis (2015) found that lesbians received fewer invitations to interview for vacancies in which “feminine” personality traits were stressed (i.e., the ideal job applicant was described as “affectionate”, “cheerful”, or “sensitive to the needs of others”). Similarly, gay male applicants received fewer invitations to interview for vacancies in which “masculine” personality traits were highlighted (i.e., the ideal job applicant was described as “ambitious”, “assertive”, or “acting as a leader”).[8] Studies have also empirically explored the mechanisms of statistical and taste-based discrimination as they pertain to trans people in the labour market (Reed et al., 2015; Van Borm & Baert, 2018). In an experimental study of 252 university students, Van Borm et al., (2020) found that, compared with cisgender men, trans men were perceived as being in worse health, being more autonomous and assertive, and having a lower probability to go on parental leave, providing evidence for both positive and negative statistical discrimination. The experiences of people who are bi are almost completely absent from these studies.

Like the research on hiring discrimination, research related to wage inequality has tended to focus on lesbian cisgender women and gay cisgender men. Beginning with Badgett’s (1995) seminal study, it has generally been asserted that gay men earn less and lesbian women earn about the same or more than their heterosexual counterparts (Ozren, 2014; Klawitter, 2015; Valfort, 2017). It is important to recognise that, beyond discrimination, these findings can be rationalised by an economic model, namely Becker’s (1981) model of household specialisation. This theory is based on the expectation that people will form traditional households in which husband and wife will specialise differentially in market and non-market production. As Black et al. (2003) surmise, a wage premium for non-heterosexual women is inconsistent with the notion that employers discriminate based solely on sexual orientation. Heterosexual women also face discrimination, and may be “forced” out of the labour market upon marriage to assume additional household responsibilities including child-rearing activities, while their husbands continue to specialise in the labour market. As evidenced by the Global Gender Gap Report, it is clear that across the world a pay disparity exists between men and women (World Economic Forum, 2020). On the other hand, gay men may be less likely than heterosexual men to anticipate getting married and being the main source of income for a family, and consequently invest less in labour market specialisation (Black et al., 2003). Meanwhile, lesbian women, understanding that women are in general discriminated against, and not anticipating marriage and family with a man, may invest more in market-oriented human capital in order to be self-sufficient (Ozren, 2014). Less likely to perform traditional gender roles, lesbian and gay people who are in relationships or married may engage equally in both the labour market and household responsibilities. Renata and Yuki were in a relationship and both worked full-time, and talked about how they came and “broke” the traditional household model of one person staying at home and one person going to work.

In a meta-analysis of 18 studies, Valfort (2017) determined that the magnitude or existence of an earnings penalty for gay men and an earnings premium for lesbian women depended on how both the "LGBT+" population and the "non-LGBT+" population used for comparison were defined. Accounting for the household specialisation bias by controlling for individuals' partnership status or focusing on non-partnered individuals only, evidence to challenge the seeming "universality" of a lesbian earnings premium and a gay male penalty has surfaced (e.g., Bryson, 2017; Wang et al, 2018). For instance, in a study of over 9,000 women aged between 22 and 27 in Australia, Carpenter (2008) found that, when controlling for partnership status of participants, compared to heterosexual women, self-identified lesbian women earned 25 per cent less weekly earnings. Meanwhile, using data from the 2012-2014 UK Integrated Household Survey, Aksoy et al. (2018) found a positive earnings differential for partnered lesbian women and a negative earnings penalty for partnered gay men compared to partnered heterosexual couples. In contrast, they found no earnings differential for non-partnered lesbian women and gay men compared with similarly situated non-partnered heterosexual women and men. In the case of people who are bi, it was found that the earnings of partnered bisexual males were 22 per cent lower than those of their heterosexual counterparts, while a 16 per cent individual earnings premium existed for single bisexual females compared to single heterosexual females. Other studies (e.g., Sabia, 2014; Bryson, 2017) echo these findings, suggesting that earnings penalties are experienced by bisexual men but not by bisexual women. Finally, in a meta-analysis of 24 papers reporting on research conducted between 1991 and 2018 in Australia, Canada, the United States, and five western European countries, Drydakis (2022) concluded that bisexual women and bisexual men experienced lower earnings than comparable heterosexual people. Research on the wages of people who are trans has focused on changes that occur after transitioning from female to male or from male to female. The results of two studies (Schilt & Wiswall, 2008; Geijtenbeek & Plug, 2018) indicate a "traditional" gender gap exists for trans people. Put simply, people who transitioned from female to male experienced no change or marginal increase in earnings, while people who transitioned from male to female experienced a decrease in earnings. Valfort (2017) notes that the gap in individual earnings between trans people and cis people has not yet been researched. Moreover, gender nonconforming people have thus far been absent from this line of inquiry. Due to the scarcity of nationwide population-based surveys that include direct questions on SOGI diversity, as well to a wide range of biases inherent to survey-based information, determining the extent and magnitude of formal discrimination faced by LGBT+ people is challenging. McFadden (2015) also notes that, while it is relatively easy to observe systemic formal discrimination by using a large statistical sample or census data, in many individual cases an LGBT+ person may not be certain that their SOGI diversity was the underlying cause of a negative formal workplace process. Overall, the studies reviewed here provide evidence that LGBT+ people remain underutilised in the labour market, and experience barriers to pursuing meaningful and fulfilling employment in which they are compensated equitably.

3.2.2 Informal discrimination

Beyond formal discrimination, LGBT+ employees also face informal discrimination in the workplace. Informal discrimination, also called *interpersonal discrimination* (Fernand, 1995; Hebl et al., 2002), refers to “harassment and other unofficial actions taken by supervisors or co-workers” (Levine & Leonard, 1984, p.706). Franzway (2016) notes that this kind of everyday discrimination is more difficult to measure, monitor, and evaluate. As such, in contrast to formal discrimination studies, much of the research on informal discrimination is qualitative in design and utilises community samples. In societies where heteronormativity is (re)produced daily within social institutions, unconscious biases and prejudices against LGBT+ people can manifest in the form of microaggressions. Rooted in critical race theory, *microaggression* initially emerged as a term used to describe acts of subtle racism. Sue et al. (2007) define racial microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights or insults” (p. 72). This definition was broadened to include oppressed groups in general (Nadal, 2008), and typologies of LGBT+ microaggressions were later developed (e.g., Sue & Capodilipo, 2008; Nadal et al., 2010; Platt & Lenzen, 2013). Based on the theoretical taxonomy developed by Nadal et al. (2011), LGBT+ microaggressions can be said to occur when people:

1. Use derogatory or out-dated language/terminology (e.g., “she-male”, “faggot”);
2. Expect others to act or be heterosexual/cisgender;
3. Assume that all LGBT+ people are the same;
4. Exoticise or dehumanise LGBT+ people;
5. Express discomfort/disapproval verbally or non-verbally (e.g., prolonged staring);
6. Deny the existence of heterosexism[9] or transphobia;
7. Oversexualise LGBT+ people; and
8. Deny their own biases and prejudices.

This taxonomy was expanded and refined based on the results of a qualitative study of transgender participants (Nadal et al., 2012). To the above, “physical threat or harassment”, “denial of bodily privacy”, “familial microaggressions”, and “systemic and environmental microaggressions" were added. Nadal and colleagues note that systemic and environmental microaggressions affect all trans people that interact with a system or community, and are particularly insidious as they typically stem from laws or practices that are unintentionally or unconsciously transphobic. Four subthemes were elucidated: (a) public restrooms; (b) the criminal legal system; (c) emergency health care; and (d) government-issued identification. A key takeaway from this study was that, while many of the microaggressions resembled those documented in literature on LGB microaggressions (Nadal et al., 2011), there were also microaggressions unique to the experiences of trans people, such as being asked invasive questions about their bodies.

Recognising that people spend much of their time at work, and that they generally cannot choose their coworkers, Galupo and Resnick (2016) argue that the workplace is a distinct setting in which to explore microaggressions. They present a typology of three microaggressions unique to the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals: workplace climate; organisational structure; and workplace policy. Regarding the first type, these microaggressions were related to the social environment within the workplace, and consisted of exclusionary and derogatory actions and language directed toward specific LGBT+ employees or toward the LGBT+ community in general. This communicated to closeted LGBT+ individuals that it was not safe to come out. The second type of microaggressions were experienced within employee-supervisor or employee-client relationships and reflected the power dynamic inherent to the employees' position. This impacted job expectations and evaluation. Finally, *workplace policy*-related microaggressions were enforced or supported by existing formal or informal policy or, in many cases, lack thereof. A disconnect between policies meant to protect LGBT+ individuals and actual enforcement of these policies was revealed; LGBT+ employee discretion in matters such as dress code or bathroom usage was compromised. This research highlights that, while coming out in the workplace has the potential to expose LGBT+ individuals to greater levels of discrimination, even in the absence of disclosure, discrimination can be experienced.

Drawing on Meyer's (1995) theory of minority stress, Waldo (1999) developed the Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ), which assesses direct and indirect experiences. In a study of 287 employed LGB individuals from two community samples, experiences of heterosexism were found to be positively related to psychological distress and physical health problems and negatively related to satisfaction with life and self-esteem. Additionally, experiences of heterosexism were mediated by level of outness. That is, individuals who were more out experienced more direct heterosexism (e.g., anti-gay jokes), while those who were more closeted experienced more indirect heterosexism (e.g., assumptions of heterosexuality). An organisational climate of heterosexism can silence LGBT+ employee voice in the workplace, leading to isolation and exclusion (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003; Bell et al., 2011). Along with silence, Chung (2001) identifies three other coping strategies LGB workers may use when faced with discrimination: *Quitting*—leaving the job to avoid discrimination; *Social Support*—using family and friends as a source of comfort and support; and *Confrontation*—directly addressing the issue with the perpetrator. As with coming out, centrality of sexual identity is thought to influence how the LGBT+ individual reacts to discrimination. In regards to quitting, literature suggests that a discriminatory workplace climate is positively correlated with turnover intention (e.g., Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Patridge, 2014; Cech & Rothwell, 2020). Even in ostensibly "gay-friendly environments" LGBT+ employees may still encounter differential treatment, with heteronormative power relations determining what is a normal and what is an abnormal manifestation of homosexuality (Rumens & Kerfoot, 2009; Williams et al, 2009). In what Duggan (2002) calls "the new homonormativity", to the extent that LGBT identities are becoming mainstream, in the workplace, acceptance is afforded only to those who are willing and able to conform to the narrow standards of professionalism. As such, LGBT+ employees may feel that they have to pass, or otherwise *cover* (i.e., downplay aspects of their LGBT+ identity; Goffman 1963/1990; Yoshino, 2007), in order to appear "professional" (Rudoe, 2010; Connell, 2014). Mizzi (2013, 2016) coined the term *heteroprofessionalism* to describe how discourses of professionalism in the workplace marginalise queer workers. Explored in the current inquiry are the ways in which participants constructed and reconciled their LGBT+ and professional identities.

In summary, informal discrimination in the workplace can range from being overt and conscious to subtle and unconscious. For LGBT+ employees, experiencing microaggressions on a daily basis can take its toll, leading to negative psychological, health, and work-related outcomes. Experience of informal discrimination have been captured by instruments such as the WHEQ (Waldo, 1999), as well as by qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews. In order to further understandings of how informal discrimination manifests in the workplace for LGBT+ people, gathering data from specific subpopulations such as gender nonconforming people, as well as at the intersections of different social categories, is crucial. For example, Balsam et al. (2011) created the LGBT People of Color Microaggressions Scale to simultaneously capture sexual and gender minority microaggressions that sexual and gender minorities of colour face from other people of colour as well as racial microaggressions they may encounter within the sexual and gender minority community. Meanwhile, Cech & Rothwell (2020) analysed 2015 survey data of a representative sample of 392,752 federal employees in 28 agencies in the U.S. using multilevel statistical modelling techniques. Results of the analysis indicated that LGBT women and people of colour have consistently more negative experiences than do men and white LGBT workers. In their discussion they argue that cultural and demographic contexts of organisations are, at least partially, a predictor of the prevalence of informal workplace inequalities. Evidently, organisational culture plays a role in normalising the acceptability and extent of discrimination against LGBT+ people.

3.3 Allyship and other forms of organisational support

In 1996, South Africa became the first country in the world to constitutionally protect individuals against sexual orientation-based discrimination. Section 9 subsection 3 of the Bill of Rights reads:

> The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Cap 2, § 9.3.).

The following subsection goes on to state that no *person* may discriminate against anyone on those grounds, either. Subsequently, the Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (No. 4 of 2000) were promulgated. Equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action (AA) laws such as these are intended to prohibit discrimination in employment as well as redress historic inequalities and increase representation of traditionally disadvantaged groups in more lucrative jobs (Mor Barak, 2016). In the case of South Africa, van Zyl (2015) notes the simultaneity of robust legislative and policy frameworks for protection against discrimination, and an environment of coercive heteronormativity and patriarchy. Revealed in her research is the persistence of everyday prejudice against LGBTI people in the workplace despite equity legislation. Similarly, recognising that laws are easier to quantify than social attitudes, Altman and Symons (2016) note how, on the surface, South Africa appears among the world’s most progressive countries with regards to LGBT+ rights. They make mention of the routine anti-gay violence, particularly against women perceived as lesbian in the form of “corrective rape”, as evidence of law reform alone being insufficient, especially if it moves far ahead of social change.

In observing the how law and social norms interact, Kahan (2000) focuses on what he calls the “sticky norms problem”; that is, “the situation in which the reluctance of decisionmakers to repudiate a social norm makes them resist enforcement of a law intended to change that norm” (p. 644). In other words, if the distance between the law and the social norm is too great, there will be resistance to change. The dominant ideologies of cisnormativity and heteronormativity constitute social norms that privilege and legitimise people who are cisgender and heterosexual, simultaneously oppressing and discriminating against gender and sexual Others. In the workplace, while on paper policies designed to eradicate the inequalities faced by LGBT+ people read well, management may be reluctant to enforce a "zero tolerance for violations" mandate, as enshrined in antidiscrimination law. Exploring this dynamic between law and social norms in the context of courts as workplaces, Brower (2015) notes how the visibility of LGBT+ workers and complaints about lack of enforcement of protection may actually harden resistance to those regulations where social norms conflict significantly with laws. In order for a law to be taken seriously, as Kahan (2000) posits, condemnation of a social norm must happen incrementally, with "gentle nudges", rather than "hard shoves". Scholars such as Becker (1971) have argued that antidiscrimination laws are unnecessary while others such as Skidmore (2004) have suggested that, despite its shortcomings as a regulatory apparatus, as well as shaping organisational policy and practices, the law has led to modifications in cultural norms. Thus, a complex push-pull dynamic can be said to exist between social norms and the law, with activists and policymakers acting upon the limits of social acceptability. Chapter 5 (section 5.2) explores this tension within the socio-historical context of Japan. Looking specifically at how this plays out in the workplace, Mor Barak (2016) writes:

> Although equal rights legislation and affirmative/positive action policies have helped disadvantaged groups obtain access to a variety of jobs not previously open to them, it is their *exclusion from circles of influence in work organizations* that has kept them from fully contributing and benefitting from their involvement in the workplace (p. 208; emphasis added).

Although EEO and AA laws that explicitly mention sexual orientation and/or gender identity are becoming increasingly commonplace (see, for example, list compiled by Mor Barak, 2016, p. 44-48), this has not necessarily led to a decrease in workplace discrimination against LGBT+ employees. The "sticky norms problem" (Kahan, 2000) offers one explanation as to the discrepancy between policy and everyday interaction. Recognising the limits of and resistance to the law, rather than focusing on punishment for noncompliance, corporations can incentivise cultural change through positive interaction with difference. This is where diversity and inclusion (D&I) management comes into play, ideally being proactive, rather than reactive, in implementation. In a meta-analysis of 27 U.S.-based studies, Webster et al. (2017) examined three workplace contextual supports—formal LGBT policies and practices; LGBT-supportive climate; and supportive workplace relationships—in relation to outcomes for LGBT+ employees.

Each of these three types of organisational support, as they pertain to theory and research, will be considered in turn.

3.3.1 Formal LGBT policies and practices

As for the first type of organisational support, *formal LGBT policies and practices* represent initiatives meant to directly and indirectly support LGBT+ employees. First and foremost, formal support for LGBT+ employees concerns discourse: What is the official stance of the organisation in regards to SOGI diversity; and how is that stance communicated? This may be encapsulated in equality or diversity statements and policies. For example, in 1984, IBM adopted a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and subsequently, in 2002, added “gender identity and expression” (IBM, n.d.). Communicating commitment to diversity can also be achieved through making existing policies, and the language used in them, more inclusive. For instance, as part of a larger package of D&I initiatives, Tata Steel changed the name “paternity leave” to “newborn parent leave”, and “additional privilege leave” to “childcare leave”, and consequently extended these benefits, and others, to same-sex parents, trans parents, and single male parents (Banerjee, 2020; India Workplace Equality Index, 2020). D&I initiatives create structural mechanisms that serve employees within and outside the company, as well as enriching the wider community. Initiatives may include: the development of employee resource groups; conducting new-hire and company-wide diversity training; incorporating diversity metrics into management and executive performance measures; developing an inclusive code of conduct for company events; aligning with non-discriminatory suppliers and distributors; monitoring and due diligence; maintaining robust and inclusive grievance mechanisms; supporting community through philanthropic efforts and public advocacy; and extending the scope of benefits, as in the previous example with Tata Steel (Webster et al., 2017; United Nations, 2017; Catlin, 2021).

As defined by Lurie (1966), *benefits* comprise “all non-wage rate cash income and all non-cash benefits that impose some cost on the employer and give some utility to the employee” (p. 17). In other words, benefits are distinguished from regular wages.[10] Examples include health care, paid leave, retirement savings and planning, work-life and convenience (i.e., telecommuting, flex-time, etc.), and travel and relocation benefits (Society for Human Resource Management, 2018). Employee benefits may be *discretionary*, that is, organisational programs that are not mandated by regulation or market forces, or *non-discretionary*: those that are mandated by the government (McGaughey et al., 2005; Hubbard & Singh, 2009; Klonoski, 2016). It is an important distinction in that, beyond those that are required by law, companies are directly responsible for the extent to which they offer benefits to their employees. Recognising that employee turnover is costly and disruptive, offering benefits is one HR strategy for retaining employees (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Management and human resources (HR) can choose to recognise the relationships of people in same- and different-sex partnerships, or the unique needs of people going through a transition, for instance, and offer benefits in kind. As discussed in the previous section, many companies are already extending health insurance coverage to same- and different-sex spouses and partners, and providing medical coverage options for people who are trans. Companies have made these benefits available even in the absence of law and in the face of potential backlash (Pichler & Trau, 2017). In study 2 of the current inquiry, the LGBT+ expatriate couples were asked about what kind of support they received from their employers. A vast range of experiences were reported by the participants, and factors such as whether or not the couple were recognised as being in a relationship by the employer, if the relationship was recognised as "same-sex" or "opposite-sex", and if the expatriate was considered an intra-company transferee or local hire all affected the extent of benefits.

Here, *signaling theory* (Spence, 1973) is useful in understanding the implications of formal LGBT policies and practices. Signalling theory implies that, in the absence of complete information, cues or signals, such as HR policies, are used by prospective job applicants or employees to inform their assessments of the organisation (Rynes, 1991; Turban & Greening, 1997; Turban, 2001). Empirical research has linked signaling theory to organisational outcomes. For example, Casper and Harris (2008) found that, for women, the mere availability of work-life benefits—signalling organisational support to the employee—was positively related to affective commitment and reduced turnover intentions. Indices such as the Australian Workplace Equality Index, and the aforementioned U.S.-based Corporate Equality Index, create benchmarks by which participating companies can be ranked and compared, and become eligible for "awards". Displaying these awards on company websites and in internal and external publications and press releases can signal to potential and existing employees that the company is serious about diversity and inclusion. However, some scholars (e.g., Rumens, 2018a; Burchiellaro, 2021) have problematised the "LGBT-friendliness" in organisations. The development of LGBT+ "best practices" has become almost formulaic, with NPO's such as Stonewall[11] packaging their expertise into "Diversity Champions" programs for companies to purchase. Leveraging the "business case for diversity" (Robinson & Dechant, 1997) rhetoric, an expectation that a "supportive" work environment for LGBT+ employees must also benefit the employer is (re)produced. In this way, equality is conditional, with LGBT+ employees having to "prove their superior economic value" (Janssens and Zanoni, 2021, p. 6), a point that was touched upon during the interview with Rin, Jun, and

Tomoko: “Yeah, you have to be an asset to the company” (Jun). Suggested benefits (for the organisation) of LGBT-supportive policies include: improved recruitment and retention; new ideas and innovations; attracting and better serving a diverse customer base; and increasing employee productivity (Sears et al., 2011). However, in a review of 36 research papers that assessed links between LGBT-supportive policies and business outcomes, Badgett et al. (2013) found that none of the studies provided direct quantitative estimates of the impact on the bottom line. For LGBT+ employees, knowing that there are supportive policies available to them, whether or not they actually need to access these policies, may contribute to their sense of inclusion. However, Clair et al. (2005) note that, if these policies are not enforced, they are likely to be interpreted as nothing more than “empty promises” (p. 84). *Decoupling* (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), or, more specifically, policy-practice decoupling, refers to the discrepancy between espoused and enacted formal policies and practices (Mor Barak, 2016). Arguably, formal LGBT policies and practices alone are not enough to meaningfully impact the workplace experiences of LGBT employees.

3.3.2 LGBT-supportive climate

The second workplace contextual support examined by Webster et al. (2017), *LGBT-supportive climate*, centres on the extent to which LGBT+ employees perceive the workplace as non-discriminatory, welcoming, and inclusive. While conceptualisations of organisational culture, which include mottos, goals, and espoused values and attitudes, are within the purview of the CEO or employer, climate represents the enactment of these values and attitudes as perceived by employees (McKay et al., 2009). In other words, climate is about concrete actions: what the employer does, not just what they say. An organisation can be said to consist of multiple climates (Schneider et al., 1994). For example, *climate for diversity*, as conceptualised by McKay and Avery (2015), refers to “the extent that employees view an organization as utilizing fair personnel practices and socially integrating all personnel into the work environment” (p. 191). Similarly, *climate for inclusion* captures the extent to which employees feel that organisational practices are fair and unbiased, that differences are valued and integrated, and that diverse perspectives are actively sought after in decision-making processes (Shore et al., 2011; Nishii, 2013; Mor Barak, 2016). Studies have investigated the link between organisational climate and psychological outcomes, including organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and personal well-being (e.g., Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Nishii, 2013; Lloren & Parini, 2017). Research has also lead to conceptualisations of such processes as *inclusive leadership* (Shore et al., 2011; Mor Barak, 2016), prescribing a set of positive leader behaviours such as “pro-diversity beliefs” and “humility” that facilitate the belongingness and uniqueness of employees (Randel et al., 2018).

During their interview, Nanami and Rika, who were both on the D&I team for Tokyo 2020, brought up the concept of *shinriteki anzensei* (psychological safety). Nanami asked what the interviewer thought could be done to develop a more LGBT-friendly work environment. Ideas such as creating a safe space for one-on-one communication built on vulnerability and empathy were supplied. In response, Rika contended that it's generally difficult for people to talk about themselves, and especially so for LGBT+ people. In the context of the workplace, *psychological safety* (Schein & Bennis, 1965) describes perceptions of the consequences of taking interpersonal risks (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson & Lei, 2014). The concept of psychological safety helps to explain why employees share information and knowledge (Collins & Smith, 2006; Siemsen et al., 2009), and speak up with suggestions for organisational improvements (Detert & Burris, 2007; Liang et al., 2012), for example. Frazier and colleagues (2017) note the difference between psychological safety and similar constructs, including work engagement and psychological empowerment. While these other positive motivational states refer to cognitions about specific jobs or tasks, psychological safety refers to perceptions of the broader social and work environment, as well as to perceptions of how other people in the workplace will respond to risk-taking behaviour (see also Carmeli & Gittell, 2009). Their meta-analysis found that a supportive work context was an important antecedent of psychological safety. Relatedly, meta-analyses (Badgett et al., 2013; Wax et al., 2018) of studies examining workplace climate for LGBT employees have shown that perceived supportive organisational climate is most strongly linked to greater disclosure. In Study 1 of the current inquiry, the concept of psychological safety provided one possible explanation as to why participants did or did not feel comfortable to bring their "full selves" to work.

Regarding measurement, in a meta-analysis of 121 independent samples, Parker et al. (2003) found that empirical studies of climate by and large consisted of variables that were measured and analysed at the individual level. Similarly, assessments of LGBT-supportive climate have typically relied on self-report methods with the individual as the unit of analysis. Developed by Liddle et al. (2004), the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Climate Inventory (LGBTCI) has been used extensively by researchers (see Webster et al., 2017 for review) to measure perceived LGBT-supportive workplace climate, usually in conjunction with other instruments. For example, Goldberg and Smith (2013) examined the relationship between work conditions and mental health in dual-earner lesbian/gay parents in the United States. They found that the relationship between job urgency—i.e., the degree of speed and time pressure experienced on the job—and mental health depended on climate: working a high-urgency job was associated with more depressive symptoms for parents in very unsupportive workplaces, and with fewer anxious symptoms for parents in very supportive workplaces. The LGBTCI is a 20-item instrument that measures a single construct (Liddle et al., 2004). Respondents answer each question using a 4-point response scale (from 1 = "Doesn't describe at all", to 4 = "Describes extremely well"), and total scores can range from 20 to 80, representing a continuum from hostile to supportive. Sample items include: "Coworkers make comments that seem to indicate a lack of awareness of LGBT issues" (reverse coded); "LGBT employees are comfortable talking about their personal lives with coworkers".

Some scholars have called into question the applicability of climate measures such as the LGBTCI in understanding workplace experiences across SOGI diverse groups. Köllen (2013) notes that biphobic attitudes appear among heterosexual coworkers as well as among homosexual coworkers, the implication being that bi employees are potentially being marginalised from "both sides". His study of 77 bi employees working in Germany found that the explicit naming of bisexuality as a relevant workforce phenomenon through internal communications, such as on the company's intranet or in staff magazines, was positively related to working climate, while the existence of gay marketing campaigns at the employing organization was negatively related to it. In explaining this result, Köllen (2013) suggests that visual snapshots of same- and opposite-sex couples used in marketing exclude the experiences of people who are bi, reinforcing a "view of life where only homo- or heterosexuality is possible" (p. 131). Meanwhile, Brewster et al. (2012) advocate for the modification of existing measures.[12] In their study, they reworded the items of the LGBTCI to better reflect the experiences of trans employees. For example, *Employees are expected to not act "too gay"* became *Employees are expected to not act "too gender non-traditional"*. Internal consistency reliability and criterion-related validity showed support for the utility of the modified versions of the measures in trans populations. Like diversity climate research in general, research of LGBT-supportive climate suffers from a lack of longitudinal data. Cross-sectional data captures a moment in time meaning that, at best, researchers can conclude that there is a correlation between perceived climate and psychological outcomes. To understand causation, researchers could measure perceived climate along with other variables at several points before, during, and after formal LGBT policies and practices are implemented or expanded, for instance. Of course, in practice, this kind of data collection method is costly and time-consuming, and potentially unviable.

3.3.3 Supportive workplace relationships

Finally, the third type of organisational support, *supportive workplace relationships*, refers to the social and instrumental support LGBT+ employees receive from interpersonal relationships in their place of work. As alluded to in the section 3.1.2, social and instrumental support are provided by similarly stigmatised Others as well as by allies (Ragins, 2008). Social support consists of affirmation and acceptance, while instrumental support consists of more tangible assistance through advocacy and intervention. For example, Tomoko provided Rin with social support when she brought Rin to her first *joshikai* (girls-only gathering), affirming her gender identity. In terms of instrumental support, Kasumi, who was a wedding planner, sometimes acted as an intermediary between a client and their parents, supporting the client and their parents through the coming out process. Meanwhile, Midori, who had a background in developing diversity and inclusion initiatives, also worked closely with parents of LGBT+ children, especially mothers, in order to foster a home environment of understanding. The term *ally* is applied to a person from a "dominant" group who offers support to someone in a "nondominant" group (Washington & Evans, 1991). Following this logic, LGBT+ allies are typically people who are heterosexual and/or cisgender, having access to privilege in social institutions that (re)produce heteronormativity and cisnormativity. Recognising the heterogeneity of the LGBT+ group, and that intersecting identities shape individual privilege and oppression, it can also be said that LGBT+ people can be allies for each other, as extended by Brooks & Edwards (2009; see also Teshima et al., 2021). For example, David was the co-founder and CTO of an IT-based start-up. Being in a "position of power" he was able to actively shape policy in the company, ensuring that SOGI diversity remained a priority. Establishing himself as a visible LGBT+ presence in the workplace, David became a company representative for the "Open Japan Project".[13] In this way, existing or potential employees could know that "someone high up in the company is gay".

Within the ally literature, practitioners have developed various typologies that exemplify concrete actions allies can take in the workplace. For example, Catlin (2021) identifies seven specific roles people who hold positions of privilege can play as "active allies" (see table 3.1). Importantly, she recognises that actions meant to be supportive can sometimes come across as patronising. Indeed, the interviewees in Brooks and Edwards' (2009) research "expressed a strong desire to be included as an equal member of the organization and not to be treated differently than other employees" (p. 139). *Consensual allyship*, a term coined by Jessica Danforth, describes a relationship in which both parties (i.e., the ally and the individual from the underrepresented group) agree to the support offered (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). "Good intentions" can have

Table 3.1 Roles allies can play in the workplace

Archetype	Exemplified by:
The Sponsor	● Vocally supporting the work of a colleague from an underrepresented group in ways that help boost their standing and reputation.
The Champion	● Deferring to a colleague from an underrepresented group, especially in a public venue, in order to send meaningful messages to a larger audience.
The Amplifier	● Ensuring that marginalised voices are both heard and respected across workplace communication channels, including in written materials and in meetings.
The Advocate	● Using power and influence to bring peers from underrepresented groups into highly exclusive circles, creating networking opportunities.
The Scholar	● Conducting self-motivated research to learn as much as possible about the challenges and prejudices faced by colleagues from marginalised groups.
The Upstander	● Speaking up when witnessing behaviour or speech that is degrading or offensive, and making stance on the matter clear, even when target of discrimination is not within earshot.
The Confidant	● Listening and validating the experience of an individual from an underrepresented group, and creating a space where they feel safe to be heard.

Adapted from Catlin, 2021

potentially harmful outcomes. For example, a person shuts down a biphobic joke and names an individual in the workplace who is bi as a way to condemn the behaviour and "stand up" for the target. They are disclosing information about that individual's sexuality without their consent, which could be detrimental to that individual's work relationships and/or career. Thus, being an ally is not about being a "knight in shining armor", riding in to "rescue" an individual from their oppression. Rather, allyship is about taking action that goes beyond empowering an individual to effect long term, systemic change (Catlin, 2021).Crucially, in the workplace, the presence of allies in higher level positions seems particularly meaningful for LGBT+ employees, as evidenced in scholarship (e.g. Day & Schoenrade, 2000), and in the current inquiry. Drawing on Kanter's (1977) theory of *homosocial reproduction*—a theory which holds that people tend to establish sponsorship ties with people who resemble them in terms of socio-demographic characteristics—studies such as those conducted by Gray et al. (2007) show how informal social networks in the workplace can perpetuate structural inequalities whereby a relatively homogeneous "elite" group is preserved. As discussed in the previous section, people who are involved in hiring and promotion processes can overlook or actively discriminate against prospective or existing employees who are LGBT+. Disrupting this hegemony may mean having allies in positions of power who can act as mentors or sponsors for LGBT+ employees. The significance of LGBT+ sponsorship has been explored in NPO-based studies (see Hewlett et al., 2013).

Networks of inclusion could also be facilitated through employee resource groups. Also known as employee networks and affinity groups, employee resource groups (ERGs) are voluntary, employee-led groups that are based on a shared goal or demographic characteristic (see Welbourne et al., 2017 for review). They may be formal or informal in nature, and developed out of either top-down or bottom-up impetus. Githens and Aragon (2009) developed a framework for understanding four different approaches to operating ERGs for LGBT+ employees and allies (see figure 3.3). The dashed lines indicate the permeability of each approach, signalling that they are not discrete orientations but rather exist along continuums. In their U.S.-based case study, they observed the ERG's successful efforts to implement diversity education sessions and secure domestic partner benefits at the organization. For LGBT+ individuals, joining an ERG could be a safe way to connect with others who are like themselves, regardless of their level of outness. Based on in-depth interviews with 149 LGB employees across 14 companies in the UK, Colgan and McKearney (2012) concluded that the LGBT+ ERGs provide a mechanism for visibility, community, and voice. However, when multiple ERGs have been established within an organisation, they can also be a site of competition over attention and resources (Scully, 2009). Overall, there has been a distinct lack of theorising and research focused on ERGs. Welbourne et al. (2017) advocate for the use of *social identity theory*, which posits that individuals within a group identify with the defining characteristics and values of that group (Tajfel and Turner, 1985), to examine the influence of ERGs on individual, group, and organisational-level outcomes.

In summary, of the three types of workplace contextual supports extended by Webster et al. (2017), formal LGBT policies and practices, which include benefits and other D&I initiatives, are the least abstract, and easiest to identify and measure. Although empirical evidence is scant, research has suggested that LGBT-supportive policies and practices can influence hiring and retention through the mechanism of signaling theory. Understanding LGBT-supportive climate is incomplete without understanding the perceptions of LGBT employees. LGBT-supportive climate, along with psychological safety, have been most strongly linked to the disclosure decision. Supportive workplace relationships represent daily micro-level interactions that create opportunities for acceptance, networking and upward mobility through employee resource groups and sponsorship. Arguably, of the three types, LGBT-supportive relationships are the least

Figure 3.3 Approaches to organizing LGBT employee groups

Emergent

Emphasise social change			Emphasise organisational effectiveness
	Queer/Radical Approaches e.g., small groups bringing subversive change, informal labor groups Small informal groups that work to bring change through overt or subtle subversive action. Reject gay/straight binaries, work with broad coalitions, and integrate broader social issues into queer activism.	**Internally Responsive Informal Approaches** e.g., informal networking groups, informal mentoring groups Unofficial groups for career development, social support among LGBT workers, encouragement of diversity for competitive advantage	
	Organized Unofficial Approaches e.g., LGBT union groups, LGBT law enforcement groups Structured groups that are not sanctioned by the employing organization. Aim for social change in society and the organization.	**Conventional Approaches** e.g., LGBT employee resource groups, diversity committees Structured, formally sanctioned groups that organize formal programs, encourage discussion about diversity for benefit of the organization.	

Strive for order

Source: Githens and Aragon, 2009, p. 126.

easy to measure and monitor at an organisational-level, yet they are impactful for the person receiving the support. Indeed, of the four variables measured, namely work attitudes, psychological strain, disclosure, and perceived discrimination, the analysis conducted by Webster et al. (2017) concluded that workplace relationships were the strongest predictor of work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and organisational commitment) and well-being, while formal policies and practices were the weakest. The key takeaway here is that, while formal policies and practices are important, LGBT-supportive relationships are what matter. Of course, in reality, there is interaction and overlap between all these types of organisational support. Finally, a workplace can be simultaneously understood as "LGBT-friendly" and sexist, racist, and ableist, and so forth, an important point raised by Rumens (2015). Again, an intersectional approach to diversity and inclusion is useful in uncovering underlying systems of privilege and oppression that are (re)produced in the organisation.

Notes

1. "Non-binary: Existing or identifying outside the sex/gender binary, being neither a man nor a woman, or being only partially or a combination of these things" (Mardell, 2016, p. 12).
2. "Genderqueer: Someone whose gender exists outside of or beyond society's binary concept of gender" (Mardell, 2016, p. 10).
3. "Outing" refers to the act of disclosing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity to a third-party without their consent (Yakushi et al., 2016). Being publicly outed can have serious negative health outcomes (see, for example, Toguchi, 2019).
4. Castro-Peraza et al. (2019) define pathologisation as "the psycho-medical, legal, and cultural practice of identifying a feature, an individual, or a population as intrinsically disordered" (p. 2).
5. The Yogyakarta Principles address a broad range of international human rights standards and their application to SOGI issues. On the 10th of November 2017 a panel of experts published additional principles expanding on the original document reflecting developments in international human rights law and practice since the 2006 Principles, The Yogyakarta Principles plus 10. The new document also contains 111 "additional state obligations", related to areas such as torture, asylum, privacy, health and the protection of human rights defenders. The full text of the Yogyakarta Principles and the Yogyakarta Principles plus 10 are available at: www.yogyakartaprinciples.org
6. The other sections and scores were: Policy & Communication (56.3%); Employee Networks (70.0%); Workplace Awareness (56.3%); Inclusion & Engagement (56.7%); Expertise & Monitoring (31.7%); Business & Supplier Engagement (54.0%) (Workplace Pride, 2019).
7. Companies rated in the Corporate Equality Index (HRC Foundation, 2021) included Fortune magazine's 500 largest publicly traded businesses (Fortune 500), American Lawyer magazine's top 200 revenue-grossing law firms (AmLaw 200) and hundreds of publicly and privately held mid- to large-sized businesses.
8. Again, what constitutes "masculine" traits and "feminine" traits is culturally and historically dependent. In the experiment, Drydakis (2015) used Bem's (1974, 1981) masculinity-femininity inventory to distinguish between masculine and feminine personality traits.
9. Heterosexism is defined by Herek (1992) as "an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community" (p. 89). It is synonymous with heteronormativity.
10. The International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) defines employee benefits as "all forms of consideration given by an entity in exchange for service rendered by employees or for the termination of employment." (IAS 19). This definition does not differentiate the two aspects of compensation, namely, wages and benefits.
11. Stonewall is an LGBT rights charity in the United Kingdom. It was formed in 1989 in response to Section 28, a series of laws across Britain that prohibited the "promotion" of homosexuality by local authorities (Stonewall, 2015).
12. Liddle and colleagues (2004) state that a weakness of the construction of the LGBTCI was that only LGB participants were solicited in the phase during which items were generated. Further, they acknowledge that working conditions for members of L, G, B, and T groups

may not be identical, such that a workplace might be LGB affirmative yet still be quite hostile to trans employees, for example.

13. For more information, see the website: http://www.open-japan-project.com/

Chapter 4 – Intersectionality Research

As introduced in chapter 1 (section 1.1.3), intersectionality can be used to investigate how, at a specific time in a particular society, intersecting power relations of multiple dimensions of difference shape social systems and individual experiences. Put another way, using an intersectional approach, social categories such as class, gender, and race are seen not as discrete entities, but instead as interrelated and mutually shaping one another (Collins & Bilge, 2016). As an analytical tool, intersectionality can be useful in understanding complex social phenomena because it challenges the researcher to critically examine several axes of difference simultaneously and ask: How do these categories interact at a societal level and at an individual level; and, what are the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power? Intersectionality is important to the current research as it reveals underlying systems of privilege and oppression. While a narrative of a shared history of oppression has been developed and deployed effectively for political purposes by members and allies of the LGBT+ community, people who are LGBT+ do not form a homogeneous group. Rather, their experiences of privilege and oppression, and thus power and positionality within a given society, are shaped by their simultaneous membership to multiple social categories. Importantly, as Weldon (2008) writes, “social relations are so complex that nearly everyone is privileged in some ways and disadvantaged in others…[however] this does not mean that everyone is *equally* advantaged and disadvantaged” (p. 195; emphasis in original). For scholarship on LGBT+ subjectivities, including in the diversity management field, trying to understand the experiences of the research participants solely through the lens of SOGI diversity is not sufficient. Intersectionality has undoubtedly been an important guiding force for the author in the development and direction of the current inquiry. Here, the following epistemological and ontological questions are considered: What is intersectionality; and, What counts as *doing* intersectional research? It will be argued that, while intersectionality was developed in the context of Black feminist studies in the United States during the 1980s, intersectionality as an analytical framework or methodology can travel successfully to and be utilised in other socio-historical contexts. In the final section of this chapter, after a review of intersectionality research in the diversity management and expatriate fields, the specific ways the current research aims to fill gaps in the literature will be presented.

4.1 Conceptualising intersectionality

4.1.1 Foundational texts

In answering the first question, “what is intersectionality?”, introducing its foundational texts—Crenshaw’s *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex* (1989), and *Mapping the Margins* (1991)—seems a reasonable place to begin. In the first piece, Crenshaw (1989) examines three court cases to demonstrate how a single-axis framework reveals the implicit grounding of white female experiences in the conceptualisation of sex discrimination, and Black male experiences in the conceptualisations of race discrimination. Thus, using the analogy of the flow of traffic in an intersection—hence *intersectionality*—the unique experiences of discrimination that Black women face are shown to be invisible in the eyes of the law. For example, in *DeGraffenreid v. General Motors* (1976), five Black women alleged that General Motor’s seniority system perpetuated the effects of past discrimination against Black women. Because General Motors did hire (white) women during the period that no Black women were hired, the court concluded that there was no sex-based discrimination. Here the employment experiences of white women obscured the hiring discrimination that Black women experienced. In other words, Black women were subsumed and considered only within the category of “women”. Crenshaw is critical of a U.S. antidiscrimination legal doctrine that assumes a discriminator treats all people within a social category the same. In the second piece, Crenshaw (1991) defines three specific forms of intersectionality: *Structural intersectionality*, which describes the “ways in which the location of women of color at the intersection of race and gender makes our actual experience of domestic violence, rape, and remedial reform qualitatively different than that of white women” (p. 1245); *political intersectionality*, which refers to the fact that historically, feminist and antiracist politics in the U.S. have pursued conflicting political agendas, resulting in the marginalisation of issues facing Black women; and *representational intersectionality*, which concerns the production of images of women of colour relying on sexist and racist stereotypes, as well as the ways that critiques of these representations further objectify, or otherwise marginalise, women of colour. Intersectionality operates on the presumption that social identity categories have meaning and consequences; power clusters around certain categories and is exercised against others. It offers a way to study the “processes of subordination and the various ways those processes are experienced by people who are subordinated and people who are privileged by them” (Crenshaw, 1991, 1297). Intersectionality, then, is about critically examining systems of oppression *and* privilege. Asserting that identity politics frequently conflates or ignores intragroup difference, Crenshaw concludes by recognising the value of intersectionality in the development of coalitions of multiple dimensions of difference.

As can be seen from this brief overview, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) uses intersectionality as a "heuristic device" (Crenshaw, 2011; see also Cho et al., 2013), primarily in relation to the law, to highlight the systemic erasure of (mostly) black women's experiences in the context of the United States. Importantly, intersectionality as Crenshaw presents it represents a culmination, or rather a naming, of a knowledge project that has a rich history. Scholars point to Maria Stewart's writings in the 1830s, Sojourner Truth's 1851 speech at the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, and arguments made by activists like the Combahee River Collective and the National Black Feminist Organization in the 1970s, as examples of groups or individuals that experientially identified the interdependence of multiple social categories (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; May, 2015; Collins and Bilge 2016; Hancock, 2019). Along with Truth, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) specifically cites Anna Julia Cooper in her analysis. Cooper (1892/1988) asserted that just as white men cannot speak to the experiences of Black men, Black men cannot speak to Black women's experiences; Black women have a distinct "voice", one that has (historically) been silenced. Moreover, Crenshaw's contemporaries (e.g., Davis, 1981; hooks, 1981; Spelman, 1988) were drawing attention to the lack of theorising at the intersection of multiple axes of inequality, and frameworks such as "multiple jeopardy" (King, 1988) and the "matrix of domination" (Collins, 1990) were developed. Like intersectionality, these frameworks sought to move away from either/or additive models of discrimination that assume categories are interchangeable or hierarchical toward a both/and conceptual stance that acknowledges interlocking or simultaneous systems of privilege and oppression. Returning to Crenshaw (1989), sometimes Black women "experience discrimination as Black women—not the sum of race and sex discrimination, but as Black women" (p. 149). A crucial takeaway here is that intersectionality operates on the premise that individual identities cannot be reduced to single characteristics. Positioned as an "event" (Puar, 2012), historicised within the political and socioeconomic context of 1980s U.S., Crenshaw's intersectionality represents a critical juncture in the way multiple categories of difference are attended to in research and in practice.

4.1.2 Traveling theory

Since its inception, intersectionality has expanded well beyond Black feminist studies to be taken up by scholars from different disciplines and different theoretical perspectives. It has seen utility across the social sciences including in education (Gillborn, 2015; Hernández-Saca et al., 2018), health care (Keshet, 2015; Bastos et al., 2018), psychology (Cole, 2009; Goff & Khan, 2013), and geography (Valentine, 2007; Hopkins & Pain, 2007). Intersectionality has been aligned with social constructionist and feminist standpoint epistemologies, as well as queer theory (see Taylor et al., 2010 for comprehensive overview), and can be thought of as a *critical theory*—that is, a theory that assumes power relations fundamentally shape the construction of knowledge, and that advances social justice goals (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016). Intersectionality also extends beyond academia to become a "critical praxis" (Cho et al., 2013; Collins, 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2016) in social justice projects in schools, companies, and communities. McCall (2005) decries intersectionality as "the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far" (p. 1771). In response to its seemingly universal popularity, Davis (2008) designates intersectionality as a buzzword, arguing that its alleged weaknesses, namely ambiguity and open-endedness, are paradoxically what have led to its success. For example, Carbin and Edenheim (2013) describe intersectionality as a "theory" which provides an ontology of neither subject nor power, and thus anyone can make it fit "their way of doing research" (p. 245). Meanwhile, Nash (2008) calls out the uneasy tension between whether intersectionality "is a theory of marginalised subjectivity or a generalised theory of identity" (p. 10). Collins (2015) voices intersectionality's definitional dilemma: "defining the field neither so narrowly that it reflects the interests of any one segment nor so broadly that its very popularity causes it to lose meaning" (p. 2). As such, intersectionality has multiple, often contested, definitions. The following "working definition" is proffered by Collins and Chepp (2013):

> Intersectionality consists of an assemblage of ideas and practices that maintain that gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, ability, and similar phenomena cannot be analytically understood in isolation from one another; instead these constructs signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them. (p. 3)

They go on to suggest that intersectionality represents a "constellation of knowledge projects" (p. 4) that seek to understand all dimensions of power relations. In this sense, intersectionality's genealogy is plural and diverse. Collins (2015) stresses that there cannot be a "finished definition" of intersectionality and that definitions "emerge from more iterative, grassroots processes that enable intellectual and political consensus to emerge everyday practices such as organizing sessions, developing syllabi, or choosing citations" (p. 3). Defying definitional constraints, intersectionality remains an amorphous, evolving concept.

Intersectionality has "gone global" (Tormos, 2017), transcending borders, languages, and cultures. Intersectionality was a prominent talking point during the 2001 United Nations World

Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (WCAR) held in Durban, South Africa, where Crenshaw (2001) herself presented her model of intersectionality.[1] Bakan and Abu-Laban (2017) argue that the WCAR process played a significant role in advancing a global discussion about intersectionality. Intersectionality's international journey has not been all smooth sailing. Along its travels, "intersectionality" as conceived by Crenshaw has undergone considerable transformation. This has been met with both trepidation and enthusiasm. Crenshaw has expressed that some readings have rendered intersectionality unrecognisable (Guidroz & Berger, 2009), and that Black feminist theorists continue to find themselves "speaking into the void" (Crenshaw, 2011, 228). These concerns have been echoed by other scholars (e.g., Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Tomlinson, 2013a; May, 2014). In his review, Hopkins (2019) surmises four key issues that pertain to the (mis)use of intersectionality in the literature:

1. A lack of recognition of the "intersectionality-like thought" (Hancock, 2016, p. 24) that existed long before Crenshaw gave the concept a name;
2. Relatedly, an (over)association of intersectionality with one specific field, year and person such that researchers "not only routinely neglect the writings and activities of many people who came before Crenshaw, but also misread the full extent of Crenshaw's arguments" (Collins and Bilge, 2016, 83);
3. A separation of intersectionality from its social-justice focused origins, resulting in a depoliticised, superficial employment of the concept (May, 2014); and
4. A lack of visibility and inclusion of Black feminists and other minority scholars as a result of the appropriation of intersectionality by the white-dominated mainstream of feminist though (Carastathis, 2016).

As discussed above, intersectionality has a rich and diverse history. Hopkins (2019) argues that there is a tendency amongst researchers that engage with intersectionality to overlook its activist and intellectual origins. Cho et al. (2013) observe that "some of what circulates as critical debate about what intersectionality is or does reflects a lack of engagement with both originating and contemporary literatures on intersectionality" (p. 788). Tomlinson (2013a, 2013b) and others (e.g., Bilge, 2013) are particularly critical of European intersectionality scholars, perceived as being prone to overindulge in meta-theoretical discussions of the shortcomings of intersectionality and failing to do justice to Crenshaw's original intentions. As for the third point, drawing on Said's (1983) "traveling theory" concept, Salem (2018) makes the case that the neoliberal academy has stripped intersectionality of much of its critical potential. Similarly, the "opportunistic" use of intersectionality as a framework in corporate diversity culture, what Bilge (2011) calls “ornamental intersectionality” (p. 3), has been problematised (e.g., Luft & Ward, 2009; Ahmed, 2012). Indeed, a content analysis of two major psychology journals conducted by Shin et al. (2017) revealed that researchers frequently used the rhetoric of intersectionality without actually investigating systems of privilege and oppression. To the last point, Collins (2015) is critical of research that carelessly situates the origins of intersectionality within academia, dislocating it from social movements advanced by women of colour. Bilge (2013) refers to this as “the whitening of intersectionality”. In response to these issues, Moradi and Grzanka (2017) offer seven guidelines for the responsible “stewardship” (Hancock, 2020) of intersectionality in research, including reading and citing original and contemporary scholarship on intersectionality from women of colour and situating the goals of transforming power dynamics and systems of inequality as central rather than tangential to research, teaching, and practice. Overall, there is a strong case to be made that the original essence of intersectionality, rooted in Black feminist activism, has become muddied and diluted, or otherwise disregarded completely.

4.1.3 Reworking intersectionality

Others are more optimistic when it comes to the expansion of intersectionality. Cognisant of the debates around the (mis)use of intersectionality, dubbed the “intersectionality wars” (Nash, 2019), Davis (2020) charts intersectionality’s transatlantic travels and presents three main areas of disagreement: how to read Crenshaw’s initial formulation of intersectionality; who should be the primary subject of intersectional analysis; and who owns intersectionality. These “bones of contention” echo the issues raised by Hopkins (2019). Here, however, some compelling counter-arguments are proffered and a call for transnational thinking when doing intersectionality is made. Regarding the first point, concerns around the (mis)interpretation of intersectionality have already been discussed. Notably, there has been an insistence among some scholars (e.g., Bilge, 2013; Tomlinson, 2013b) to return intersectionality to its inaugural formulation, what Nash (2016) terms “intersectional originalism”. Nash problematises this mode of evaluation and practice of rescuing and forgetting, contending that the idea of a “pure” intersectionality is a political fantasy. Whether it is being deployed, critiqued, or safeguarded, intersectionality is always being reworked; no reading can exist free of the author’s biases or worldview, whether or not these biases or worldview are actually made explicit. In terms of the “who” of intersectional analysis, the idea that Black women, as a proxy for women of colour, are the essential subjects of intersectionality has been questioned. The concern is that analytical categories have become emptied of their meanings such that talking about “class”, “race”, and “gender” always signifies the reified subject of the poor Black woman. As Dhamoon notes, “the privilege assigned to this trinity is not intrinsic to the study of categories but indicative of the choices researchers have made ... in specific historical contexts" (2011: 5). Puar (2012) argues that intersectionality used to qualify the specific difference of women of colour produces an Other who must always be displayed as resistant, subversive, or articulating a grievance. Similarly, Carbado (2013) insists that "[f]raming intersectionality as only about women of color gives masculinity, whiteness, and maleness an intersectional pass (p. 841). This in turn further naturalises white male heterosexuality as the normative baseline against which all others are intersectionally differentiated. As discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.1.2), this same issue has surfaced in diversity rhetoric whereby "diversity" always refers to the Other: people living with disability, women, LGBT+ people, etc. Scholars such as Weldon (2008) and Yuval-Davis (2011a) also advance that intersectionality has application beyond marginalised groups, and beyond disadvantage and oppression. As Mooney (2016) puts it, "intersectionality's real strength lies in its ability to reveal the experiences of the "sometimes" marginalized *and* the "sometimes" privileged (p. 716; emphasis in original; see also Dhamoon, 2011). Yet, as Puar (2012) notes, intersectionality rarely refers to work on white subjects, and more generally it rarely refers to work addressing privileged subjects. In *Mapping the margins* (1991), Crenshaw makes it clear that her focus on the intersections of race and sex is not at the exclusion of other social categories: "the concept [of intersectionality] *can and should be expanded* by factoring in issues such as class, sexual orientation, age, and color" (p. 1245; emphasis added). Intersectionality has, and should continue to be, an important tool in critically examining the oppression that Black women in the U.S. face, and in advocating for change. However, limiting intersectionality to the study of Black women and to the study of oppression stifles its full potential. A move away from the race-gender-class triumvirate toward the analysis of the dynamic between other categories such as age and sexuality is underway, as the current paper can attest to.

Finally, regarding the ownership of intersectionality, by no means disregarding the importance of proper citation when using the ideas of others, Davis (2020) questions whether subsequent readings and uses of intersectionality should always be faithful to Crenshaw's original intention. The concern here is that, if only certain iterations of intersectionality are deemed legitimate, there is no room for new insights to be made. In actuality, as has been shown, a close reading of Crenshaw (1989, 1991) allows for interpretation and elaboration of intersectionality and encourages expansion. Although Said (1983) is clear that theories run the risk of becoming a "dogmatic reduction of the original version" (p. 239) when they travel, he later goes on to suggest that in travel there is the promise of reinvigoration and transgression (Said, 2000). For example, intersectionality is now being applied within a transnational frame (e.g., Radhkrishnan, 2008; Pukayastha, 2010; Choo, 2012; Anthias, 2012). Depending on where someone is located geographically, they may have more or less access to privilege. In intersectional analysis, Anthias (2013b) proposes the use of a *translocational* lens as a heuristic tool. This shifts the focus from groups to social locations, enabling the understanding of contradictory social locations and therefore the intersection between privilege and oppression. Importantly, universalism is dropped in favour of more nuanced, transnational and localised inquiry. Conceptualisations of categories such as "gender" and "race" have different meanings in different parts of the world: "Just as there is diversity among individual women … there is diversity across countries in their national-level gender inequalities based on intersecting axes of transnational, regional, cross-cutting, and unique national issues that structure gendered differences and concerns" (Bose, 2012, p. 71). The world is changing, and by bringing new perspectives, scholars are ensuring that intersectionality is not left behind. There has also been a decentering of the notion that intersectionality has a single point of origin. Scholars such as Hancock (2016) argue that intersectionality has always been global. Yuval-Davis (2011b) highlights the parallel development of intersectionality in Europe and the United States. As Collins and Bilge (2016) write: "Intersectionality as an analytic tool is neither confined to nations of North American and Europe nor is it a new phenomenon. People in the Global South have used intersectionality as an analytic tool, often without naming it as such" (p. 3). To illustrate this point, they cite the work of Savitribai Phule (1831-1897), a Dalit social reformist in India (see also Banerjee & Gnosh, 2018). Ultimately, while the popularity and pre-eminence of Crenshaw's intersectionality cannot be understated, "intersectionality" is a name given to a form of critical inquiry of power as it relates to multiple categories of difference, one that has been practiced in various iterations throughout time and space. A project of tethering intersectionality to a specific time, person, or geographic location, is futile. Although intersectionality may not always be reworked in ways that everyone will be happy with, Davis (2020) concludes that "the last thing intersectionality studies need are saviours and gatekeepers" (p. 124).

Reflecting on the above, it is clear that intersectionality has been interpreted and expounded upon in myriad ways, and while some have welcomed this, others have resisted. As a white man, it is important that the author heed the concerns raised here, taking care to utilise intersectionality in a sensitive and ethical manner. It would be easy to feature only the contributions of those who have a stronghold on the production of knowledge within and outside of academia: people who are white/men/cis-het or, in the case of Japan, cis-het Japanese men.

The current inquiry has presented an opportunity to practice reflexivity, recognise privilege, and give voice to those who are usually silenced. It is important that the Black feminist roots of intersectionality are acknowledged and celebrated. Arguably, as a traveling theory (Said, 1983) it is of equal import that intersectionality be given the space to be embraced and adapted by researchers and practitioners working in different socio-historical contexts; that is, beyond the confines of the U.S., by people who are not (only) Black women, about people who are not (only) Black women. In this way, privilege can be examined and critiqued, just as oppression can be highlighted and combatted within the specific contexts in which it manifests.

4.2 Operationalising intersectionality

4.2.1 Key components of doing intersectional research

In answering what counts as doing intersectional research or, more appropriately, what makes for "good" intersectionality research, scholars concede that a lack of consensus exists around how intersectionality should be applied (McCall, 2005; Davis, 2008; Choo & Ferree, 2010). Chang and Culp (2002) ask: "How does one pay attention to the points of intersection? How many intersections are there? Is the idea of an intersection the right analogy?" (p. 485). Moreover, writings on the methodological challenges of doing intersectional research are extensive (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Christensen & Jensen, 2012; McBride et al., 2015). Taking stock of the literature, key—some authors might argue *required*—components of doing intersectional research emerge. They include an attending to power, practicing reflexivity, and emphasising social justice advocacy. Additionally, determining the categories, context, and level of analysis in intersectionality research is important. Here, each component will be looked at in turn and related to the current research. First, in Collins' (1990) view, the intersectional method needs to take into account four domains of power: *structural* (laws and institutions); *disciplinary* (administrative and bureaucratic management); *hegemonic* (cultural, ideological naturalization of relationships of domination); and *interpersonal* (everyday interactions influenced by various hierarchies). Dhamoon (2011) sees the critique of power— how it operates, its effects, and the possibilities of transformation—as the central component of intersectionality. The present study examines the role of power, embedded in various domains as outlined by Collins (1990), in shaping the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals. It also offers a critique of how certain identities and relationship formations are privileged, normalised, and even taken for granted.

Second, Atewologun and Mahalingam (2018) recommend the cultivation of *intersectional reflexivity*, which involves the researcher identifying their own relevant intersectional identities, being sensitive to identity salience in the collection and analysis of data, and, subsequently, managing the emotions, knowledge, and experiences that are a result of this heightened awareness. In the role of interviewer, the author was keenly aware of their social positionality and privilege as a white academic cis man in Japan. Without a doubt this positionality influenced the participant/researcher relationship dynamic, affecting what the participants felt safe to disclose or necessary to withhold, if only on a subconscious level. When interacting with the participants it was vital that the researcher: allowed the participants a lot of space to express themselves; sought clarification rather than make assumptions; and maintained a level of professionalism and emotional restraint so as not to unduly influence the participants' responses. Third, as defined by Ingram and Walters (2007), *social justice* refers to "the conditions in society in which all members have the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations, social benefits, and the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of society." (p. 27). "Around the world, those interested in a more comprehensive and transformative approach to social justice … have used the language and tenets of intersectionality to more effectively articulate injustice and advocate for positive social change" (Yuval-Davis, 2011b, xii). Intersectionality is about "giving voice" (Collins, 1990) to largely silenced and socially oppressed groups in order to render the invisible visible (Alfred & Chlup, 2010). Thus, the ways in which systems of power within a given society perpetuate the marginalisation of certain groups are revealed and, through political activism, disrupted. Focusing on the dominant ideologies of heteronormativity and *tan'itsu minzoku shakai*, this research shows how LGBT+ people in Japan continue to face inequalities within and outside the workplace, and advocates for change through education and legal reform.

Regarding categories, McCall (2005) classifies methodological approaches to doing intersectionality, positioned on a continuum, as follows: (1) *anticategorical complexity*, in which analytical categories are deconstructed and experiences are considered without preconceptions about shared characteristics among individuals; (2) *intracategorical complexity*, in which experiences are studied within a given category; and (3) *intercategorical approach*, in which experiences are compared across categories. Based on this typology, the current inquiry represents intracategorical complexity. "LGBT+" serves as the primary category of analysis, and within-group differences are explored and articulated. The number and type of analytical categories to examine may be predetermined or come out of the data. As discussed in section 4.1.3, the categories of race, gender, and class have traditionally been given precedence in intersectionality studies, including in the study of organisations. For example, Acker's (2006) *inequality regimes* framework sees intersectionality as the mutual reproduction of class, gender, and racial relations of inequality in organisations. While not discounting the importance of other differences such as religion and sexuality, for Acker the categories of class, gender, and race are the most "thoroughly embedded in organizing processes" (p. 445). Cognisant of the influence of "foundational theoretical texts" in shaping what is visible and invisible in the literature, Healy et al. (2019) are critical of the Acker's (2006) *ex ante* determination of which particular identities carry the greatest significance within organizational processes and practice. Elsewhere, Tatli and Özbilgin (2012) advocate for an *ex post* "emic approach" in determining the salient categories of a study. This approach was used in the current research to draw out the categories of "age", "social gender", "nationality", and "marital status". In terms of context, Bowleg (2008) suggests that intersectionality research is best defined as "the analysis and interpretation of research findings within the socio-historical context of structural inequality for groups positioned in social hierarchies of unequal power" (p. 323). Recognising that the meanings and values attached to social identity categories, as well as the way systems and processes confer privilege and oppression to those categories, can change over time and place (Hulko, 2009), situating the study within a specific socio-historical context acts as an important boundary condition of the analysis. The setting of the current research is Japan, or more specifically Tokyo, in the first quarter of the 21st century.

Finally, intersectionality can be used to address sociological questions at multiple levels of analysis. Researchers typically make delineations between micro-, meso-, and macro-level processes. For example, Collins (2000) focuses on macro-level social institutions such as law, culture, and politics as the site of the construction and reproduction of oppression and discrimination at the intersections of class, race, and gender. Cole (2009), on the other hand, focuses on micro-level identity construction processes in examining how "[social] category memberships mark groups with unequal access to power and resources" (p. 172). Meanwhile, Acker (2006) focuses on the meso-level, using the lens of intersectionality to explore inequality regimes in organisations. Rodriguez et al. (2016) and others (Staunæs, 2003; Collins, 2009; Agosto & Roland, 2018) have drawn attention to the (over)emphasis of analysis at one level to the detriment of the other in the intersectionality literature. In overcoming this limitation, Winker and Degele's (2011) multilevel approach takes identity construction as a starting point, before analysing structural power relations such as sexism and racism, and then examining their effects at the level of identity. Similarly, Syed and Ozbiligin (2009) developed a multilevel relational framework that considers macro-, meso-, and micro-level processes in relation to diversity management outcomes. Achyldurdyyeva and Wu (2021) used this framework to understand the experiences of LGBT employees in Taiwan. They gathered macro-level data regarding demographic, economic, and regulatory factors through government statistics and NPO reports. At the macro-societal level, they noted the tensions between robust SOGI inclusive legislation and traditional family values and gender norms. Official documents of large, award-winning Taiwanese companies were compiled in a case study database, constituting the meso-level data. Meso-organizational level analysis revealed inter-generational conflict and misunderstandings. Ententched in traditional cultural values, the older, usually male, superiors were resistant to change and indifferent toward the proactive adoption of LGBT-friendly policies and practices. Finally, micro-level data included primary data from face-to-face interviews with three LGT couples and secondary data of 41 LGB employees available from a nationally representative survey. At the micro-individual level, while LGBT employees were found to have strong psychological support from friends and the broader LGBT community, coming out at work and at home remained a challenge, ultimately impacting their career development and mental health. Drawing upon a variety of primary and secondary data sources, the present study examined the interplay between: the (re)production of dominant ideologies in social institutions (macro-level); the organisation and treatment of diversity within corporations, as well as in the wider business community (meso-level); and the way that the participants constructed and navigated their identities and experienced differing levels of privilege and oppression as LGBT+ employees (micro-level) within the socio-historical context of Japan. The interaction between these three levels is visually articulated in the multilevel relational framework presented in chapter 2 (section 2.3.2).

4.2.2 Intersectionality as method

Intersectionality as method is never elaborated upon in Crenshaw's original thesis, and Nash (2008) and others (Bowleg, 2008; Shields, 2008; Cho et al., 2013) note the lack of clearly defined intersectional methodology. Carastathis (2014) concedes that "intersectionality may function less as a research method and more as a heuristic to interpret results of quantitative or qualitative research" (p. 308). Scholars such as Warner (2008) and Ferree (2010) agree that intersectionality does not require an entirely new set of methods, and it has been found to be suitable for both qualitative (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Shields, 2008; Syed, 2010) and quantitative (e.g., Choo & Ferree, 2010; Else-quest & Hyde, 2016; Hollis, 2018) methods. Calling for methodological pluralism in intersectionality research, Rodriguez et al. (2016) and others (e.g., Creswell, 2012; Woodhams & Lupton, 2014; Heiskanen et al., 2015) suggest that scholars should not limit their choices to methods already employed in the field. In particular, in their review, Rodriguez et al. (2016) note the paucity of longitudinal, as well as multilevel and cross-level, research designs. It seems that, rather than constituting a fully-fledged method in its own right, intersectionality can be best described as an augmentation of the wider research design; an interpretive lens through which to view the data that has already been collected through qualitative and/or quantitative means. In the current inquiry, for example, qualitative data was collected through interviews and a short-answer survey, and the data was sorted and analysed using the grounded theory process as prescribed by Charmaz (2006). Intersectionality also aligned with the researcher's epistemological stance, that of social constructionism and queer theory: a focus on individual identity and subjectivity; practicing reflexivity throughout the research process; and questioning normative frameworks. Intersectionality as a mindset helped the researcher view the data through new eyes. The researcher became attuned and sensitised to the power structures the participants were describing, either implicitly or explicitly, across the two studies. This resulted in an additional layer of analysis, one that unfolded organically as it became clear that examining the systems of privilege and oppression that operate in Japan could help explain the participants' lived experiences above and beyond their LGBT+ identities. Further, rather than treating the cohorts of Japanese LGBT+ individuals, LGBT+ expatriate individuals, and LGBT+ expatriate couples as discrete populations, intersectional analysis across the cohorts was facilitated, and the uneven ways in which privilege and oppression shaped participant experiences were revealed.

Intersectionality was a good fit for unpacking the simultaneity and complexity of the analytical categories, as well as for critiquing dominant ideologies and normative institutional frameworks. In theory, recognising that individual identities cannot be reduced to a single category becomes readily apparent. In practice, operationalising intersectionality to capture this irreducibility in empirical research is not so straightforward. In later versions of the short-answer survey, additional questions were added that inquired about the participants' experiences of discrimination based on specific analytical categories (i.e. "expatriate couple/family", "foreigner", "sexuality", "gender"). However, the researcher queried this decision: Why these categories? How many categories are sufficient? Adding these questions also made the short-answer survey increasingly unwieldy. Moreover, asking the respondents to pinpoint the source of the discrimination they face may not be reasonable, as discrimination can occur at simultaneous group membership locations. However, scholars such as Belkhir and Barnett (2001) and Bowleg (2008) maintain that isolating categories and their impact on the individual experience is, while seemingly antithetical, a necessary preliminary step in intersectionality analysis. Carastathis (2014) concludes that irreducibility is a "theoretical commitment on the part of the researcher …

[and that] simultaneity is a function of an integrative meta-analysis which synthesizes essentially additive data" (p. 308). In other words, for the sake of presenting cogent analyses, the lived experiences of the research participants need to be sorted and broken down into more manageable narratives. In the current research, this was achieved by examining LGBT+ identity as it related to each of the other four social categories one at a time, while acknowledging that in reality all of these categories were operating simultaneously, as well as adding categorical complexity when it served to explain experiences of privilege and oppression.

4.2.3 The "nimble" approach

Attempting to dispel the notion that intersectional methods are too difficult to implement, Mooney (2016) presents four basic methodological questions that should be resolved by the researcher at the beginning of their study:

1. Is it an intersectional study?
2. What is the theoretical framing that fits the context of the research?
3. Should the study be based on individual identity or organizational and societal processes?
4. What are the meanings attached to categories of difference?

First and foremost in this *nimble* approach, Mooney (2016) contends that a study is intersectional when the aim is to reveal inter- and/or intracategorical differences, and where dominant/privileged individuals are not positioned at the centre of the research. By this measure, it can be said that the current study is intersectional as it examines the intracategorical complexity of people who are LGBT+. Second, the theoretical foundation and research question should be determined. In the current study, theories of power (Foucault, 1976/1978) and performativity (Butler, 1990/2006) emanating from poststructuralist philosophy, along with stigma theory (Goffman, 1963/1990), provided an important point of departure in understanding the experiences of LGBT+ people in the workplace. A guiding, overarching research question, with the aim to uncover intragroup heterogeneity, was proposed at the outset of the study. It is suggested a comprehensive review of the extant literature may help the researcher to understand which social groups are (non)dominant within a specific socio-historical context and, consequently, decide which categories of difference should be studied. Mooney (2016) also concedes that some categories may emerge later on; this was the case in the current study. Third, the researcher needs to decide whether analysis will commence with examining individual identity or with organizational processes. As already articulated many times, this study centres on the lived experiences of LGBT+ individuals. The downsides of an identity-centred approach that explores more than two dimensions of difference is, as Mooney (2016) avers, the difficulty of balancing the complex intersections of multiple identities, as well as the difficulty of tracking competing aspects of individual identity (see also Acker, 2006, 2012). On the other hand, a purely organisational process approach may inadvertently render participants as mere passive recipients, ignoring their self-determination and agency within organisational and societal systems. Mooney (2016) thus advocates for a multilevel approach that, echoing Choo and Ferree's (2010) suggestion, envisions social identity as co-constructed with macro and meso categories and relations.

Finally, the number of and type of categories of difference to study, as well as how to interpret those categories, should be established. Mooney (2016) acknowledges that covering all dimensions of difference perfectly represents an "impossible objective" (p. 713). As previously mentioned, "LGBT+" was the only category decided upon by the researcher *a priori*. The other four categories came out of the data *a posteriori*, arguably to the betterment of the research; the researcher was not constrained by assumptions regarding which and how many categories of difference were important in the participants lives. While relying on the powerful and efficient sorting capabilities of data analysis software NVivo (ver. 12), this process was highly intuitive: "data must be allowed to speak and reveal the weighting of each category of difference in that particular context" (Mooney, 2016, 713). Further, an approach to sampling that privileges diversity over size is promoted. This includes the study of people with power to help illuminate "systems of domination" (McBride et al., 2015, 338). Participants in the current study included white people, men, and people in opposite-sex relationships, which enriched understandings of which social locations are valued and rewarded in Japanese society. A key challenge here is how to give voice to those who have historically and continue to wield considerable privilege, such as men, without reinforcing that privilege and reproducing the marginalisation of Others in the research (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011). In the current study it was important to consistently locate these privileged positions within relations of power. Regarding how the categories are interpreted, in line with Hancock's (2007) context-based conceptualisation of difference, Mooney (2016) sees significant utility in viewing categories as "performance" rather than rigid classification. How difference is enacted through normative performance can thus be explored at multiple levels of analysis. Data are collected that capture "both the agency of individuals in making the world they inhabit and the enabling and constraining forces of the world as it has been produced" (Choo and Ferree, 2010, 134).

In the current study, "nationality", rather than "race" or "ethnicity", was deemed most appropriate in highlighting the Japanese/foreigner divide that is embodied in power relations and social institutions in Japan. Similarly "social gender" was distinguished from gender identity as it relates to people who are trans to underscore the performative nature of gender in Japanese society. Rather than making observations based on stratified age groupings (e.g., 20-29 year olds, 30-39 year olds, etc.) age was viewed primarily through the lens of an information access divide; a pre-Internet world and a post-Internet world. Finally, marital status was interpreted as part of a societal and organisational reward system that offers economic and reproductive security to (cis) women and access to benefits and career advancement to (cis) men who engage in heterosexual marriage and family formation in Japan. Again, these interpretative lenses came out of the data analysis. In summary, there is no one way to do “good” intersectionality research. Scholars have spent a lot of time trying to pin down intersectionality, but it continues to refuse standardisation; perhaps this is for the best. It remains agile, adaptable, and most importantly, critical. The nimble intersectional approach introduced by Mooney (2016) asks important questions about applying intersectionality theory in research and acts as a useful guide in the decision-making process during the early research stages. Ultimately, the current research proceeded in a non-linear fashion, took some unexpected turns, and was rife with adjustments and trial-and-error. In other words, it was an unabashedly messy process that resulted in the production of new knowledge.

4.3 Intersectionality in management and organisation studies

4.3.1 Diversity management field

Arguably, the current research represents a unique intersection of geographic location, subject of research, and research design. Examining the intersectional workplace experiences of LGBT+ employees in the context of Japan is uncharted territory. Using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006) presents an opportunity to collect rich qualitative data, generate new theories, and address important gaps in the literature. Now that an understanding of the ways in which intersectionality has been conceptualised and operationalised in research has been established, it is time to focus in on intersectionality research as it pertains to management and organisation studies (MOS), particularly in the diversity management and expatriate fields. Although intersectionality has experienced significant utility in sociological research, as discussed above, a review of the MOS literature reveals that intersectionality has hitherto been largely neglected as an analytical framework. There have been ongoing calls to explore organisational processes and diversity management practice though an intersectionality perspective, particularly in light of globalisation and transnationalism (e.g., Acker, 2006; Styhre & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2008; Holvino, 2010; Zander et al., 2010). Research that fails to theorise the heterogeneity of and interaction between identity categories and instead treats them as stand-alone phenomena (Tatli

& Özbilgin, 2012) typifies the field of diversity management. In this way, managing diversity becomes a one-size-fits-all endeavour, such that policies developed and employee resource groups (ERGs) established to support "women", for instance, should necessarily benefit all women in a company, irrespective of their actual social position at the intersections of class, sexuality, age, and so forth. For example, Dennissen et al. (2020) use Crewshaw's (1991) concepts of structural intersectionality and political intersectionality to qualitatively examine the ERGs—including LGBT networks—in two Dutch organisations. In line with earlier research conducted in the U.S. by Kalev et al. (2006), they found that the single category structure of networks resulted in marginalisation, a lack of collaboration between networks, and a preservation of the status quo as the implicitly privileged majority (e.g., white people in the LGBT network) continued to set the agenda. Moreover, the small corpus of existing empirical studies of intersectionality in organizations is characterised by an emphasis on individual understandings and constructions of identities in relation to work (e.g., Bell & Nkomo, 2003; Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Atewologun & Sealy, 2014) while overlooking or obscuring socio-institutional processes. Focusing solely on individual identity and experiences does little to advance the broader social justice agenda that distinguishes intersectionality as a critical theory. Approaches have been developed that move away from individualistic understandings of workplace inequalities, including Holvino's (2010) *simultaneity* approach, which reconceptualises the intersectionality of social differences as "simultaneous processes of identity, institutional and social practice" (p. 15), and Mirza's (2013) *embodied* approach, which combines macroeconomic political social discourses that shape inequalities with individuated subjectivities that are lived within the body. As discussed in section 4.2.1, the current inquiry adopts a multilevel approach in understanding the lived experiences of LGBT+ people in Japan.

4.3.2 Expatriate field

Meanwhile, in a bilbiometric review of 1650 articles published from 1998 to 2017, Andersen (2021) found that literature in the expatriation field is represented by four major research streams: expatriate adjustment, expatriates and multinational corporations (MNCs), methodological rigour and expatriate categories, and expatriates and career. The first and most prolific research steam, expatriate adjustment, relates to expatriates at the individual unit of analysis, and how they cope, adapt, and interact with the host country environment. Empirical research in this stream remains heavily influenced by the three-dimensional adjustment scale—i.e., adjustment to work; adjustment to interacting with host nationals; and adjustment to general non-work environment—formulated by Black (1991), despite the building scrutiny and criticism surrounding its theoretical robustness (see, for example, Kubovcikova, 2016). Themes in the expatriates and MNCs steam include examining the knowledge flows of expatriates, inpatriates (i.e., intra-company transfer), and repatriates (e.g., Harzing, Pudelko, & Reiche, 2016), and understanding the variability of expatriate identification with and allegiance to the subsidiary and parent company (e.g., Michailova, Mustaffa, & Barner-Rasmussen, 2016). Research that addresses the question of to whom the term “expatriate” applies characterises the next research stream (e.g, Tharenou, 2015). Studies that define the boundary conditions that separate assigned expatriates (AEs) from self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) (e.g., Andresen et al., 2014), as well as studies that makes comparisons between the two types (e.g., Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009) are particularly prevalent. Finally, the expatriates and career research stream includes the themes of expatriation as a vessel to increase career capital (e.g., Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016), expatriate career intentions (e.g., Presbitero & Quita, 2017), and career factors for expatriates working in hostile environments (e.g., Dickmann & Watson, 2017).

Overall, traditional expatriate research has been marked by a U.S.-centric workforce focus (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014), a reliance on primarily quantitative surveys (see Hechanova et al., 2003 for meta-analysis of expatriate adjustment literature), and the use of predominantly heterosexual male expatriate samples, with a female “trailing spouse” (e.g., Takeuchi et al., 2002; van der Zee, et al., 2005; Brown, 2008; Rose et al., 2010). Recognising a lacuna in the research, there have been some recent attempts to focus on underrepresented groups including women (McNulty, 2013), and LGBT expatriates (Gedro et al., 2013; McPhail et al., 2014). In the case of LGBT expatriate studies, major streams of research include opportunities, challenges and barriers (e.g., McPhail et al., 2016), discrimination and stigmatisation (e.g., McNulty et al., 2018), and safety concerns (e.g., Centner & Neto, 2021), and the research itself is overwhelmingly qualitative in design. For example, drawing on social capital theory, analysis of interviews with 20 lesbian and gay expatriates revealed that sexual minority status was viewed as both an enabler and a disabler in expatriation (McPhail et al., 2016). LGBT status was found to be an advantage for some employees, with lesbian and gay partners having greater mobility opportunities than their heterosexual counterparts. Meanwhile in a study of the role of employee resource groups and allies, survey and interview data from 15 LGB employees and 5 global mobility managers revealed that, when it comes to the opportunity for them to have a say about matters of global mobility, discrimination and stigmatization still existed for many LGBT employees (McNulty et al., 2018). McPhail & Fisher (2015) studied the use of social media among LG expatriates as a means of acculturation. Interviews with 21 participants revealed that expatriates typically formed inter-ethnic social contacts at an accelerated rate. Finally, upon analysis of four in-depth clinical cases of LGBT expatriates based on in-depth interviews, Kim and Von Glinow (2017) argue that the interplay of macro-level (national) policy, meso-level (organisational) culture, and micro-level (individual) experience contribute the disclosure decision of LGBT expatriates.

While studying the experiences of people who are LGBT and expatriates is by nature intersectional, only two papers were found that examined LGBT expatriate experiences through an intersectionality lens, explicitly practicing reflexivity and attending to power relations: Paisley and Tayar (2016) and Centner and Neto (2021). In the former, a conceptual piece, Paisley and Tayar (2016) articulate how intersecting aspects of country culture and organizational culture, characterized as tight vs. loose and inclusive vs. hostile culture, influence LGBT employee identity management strategies in the workplace. They argue that, for the LGBT expatriate, a supportive organisational context can "override" a hostile national context. In line with McPhail et al. (2016), organisational support was seen as crucial in contexts that are deemed dangerous for LGB expatriates. McPhail & McNulty (2015) define a dangerous location for LGBT expatriates as one where "there is any event or life circumstance that presents a threat, real or perceived, to the health, wellbeing, safety and security of an LGBT employee including a lack of social or legal protection on the grounds of sexual orientation" (p. 745). They found that the comfort factor for participants was more important than the legal status of LGBT people in a particular host country. In the latter, Centner and Neto (2021) concluded that, in the context of Dubai, while the expatriate gay men in their study were shielded from official homophobia in many ways, this did not equate to the erasure of peril for any LGBT+ person. Here, they avoid the mistake of assuming that individual experiences are representative of a group norm. Thus, understanding how the cultural and legal landscape of a country presents challenges unique to LGBT+ individuals, as well as intercategorical complexity of people who are LGBT+, is important in expatriation research. In this body of LGBT+ expatriate research, countries participants had expatriated to included Egypt, Panama, Singapore, Thailand, and Yemen. To date, there has been no inquiry of the LGBT+ expatriate experiences where Japan is the host country.

4.3.3 Filling a gap in the literature

Literature that does centre on LGBT+ experiences in the context of Japan is characterised by an under-theorisation and under-exploration of the workplace as a site of intersectional inequality. Indeed, a cursory search of Google Scholar using combinations of keywords such as "Japan", "LGBT", "diversity", "intersectionality", "workplace", reveals a dearth of research. Sato (2015) contributed an article to *New Ergonomics Perspective* (Ed. Yamamoto) that concerns diversity management of sexual minorities, although it is only theoretical and not necessarily specific to the Japanese workplace context. Japan is mentioned once in an article by Ng and Rumens (2017). A table of LGBT rights in OECD countries is presented, and the fact that there are currently no laws regarding LGBT discrimination in the workplace in Japan is highlighted. Similarly in Mor Barak (2016), a table on global antidiscrimination and equal rights shows that in Japan sexual orientation is not protected. There is by no means a deficit of English language literature on LGBT+ experiences in Japan. Important themes such as masculinity and heteronormativity (Dasgupta, 2010; 2017), marriage and family (Lunsing, 2001/2016), politics and identity (McLelland et al., 2007), and the media and citizenship (Mackie, 2008; 2017), have all been explored with allusions to the workplace. There have also been some studies that examine the identity management strategies of Japanese LGBT+ individuals (e.g., Mackie, 2008; Dasgupta 2017). For example, Lunsing's (2001/2016) research, which included LGBT+ participants, touched on the context-dependant and performative nature of self-presentation. Additionally, there is at least one study in English that considers the deployment of foreigner identity in the Japanese workplace. Employing an interactional sociolinguist approach, Moody (2014) concluded that the *gaijin* (foreign) identity was co-constructed by the individual and their coworkers, and that this outsider position could be leveraged to manage social relationships and complete tasks efficiently. Missing from this literature are studies that critique diversity management practice, uncover systems of privilege and oppression, and envisage social justice outcomes. Recognising that the majority of studies in MOS reflect the experiences of people in European and American contexts (Jonsen et al., 2011; Ozeren, 2014) and that there are a lack of studies on the workplace experiences of Japanese LGBT+ employees in the English language, as well as a lack of research on LGBT+ expatriate experiences in Japan, the present study fills a gap in the literature.

There are two more points that underpin the rationale for this study. First, there has been a tendency in the literature to apply research findings generally across the LGBT+ population, when in many cases the sample population includes only cisgender gay men and lesbian women while excluding bi and trans individuals. Case in point, despite readily deploying the term "LGBT expatriates", the aforementioned studies by McPhail and McNulty (2015) and McNulty et al., (2017) did not actually include trans individuals in their sample. In fact, most of the research conducted thus far on "LGBT" expatriate populations has focused only on lesbian and gay expatriates. As articulated in chapter 1 (section 1.2.1), the use of the term LGBT can be misleading. Köllen (2016a) elaborates: "As one's gender identity is not directly related to one's sexual orientation, subsuming transgenderism into this umbrella term, together with different sexual orientations, marginalises the unique stressors transgender employees have to face" (p. v). Recognising the heterogeneity of LGBT+ employees is important as it has been shown that work-related difficulties unique to bi or trans employees have received less attention (Ozeren, 2014). Another review found that out of the 36 studies, only four and eleven included trans, and bisexual people respectively (Badgett et al., 2013). It is important not to assume that what is salient to one group (e.g., lesbians) is salient to another (e.g., trans) (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2014). In a Human Rights Campaign (2014) report, it was revealed that bisexual youth face unique challenges due to the pervasiveness of biphobia and myths and stereotypes that trivialize or undermine the legitimacy of bisexual identity. Similarly, Law et al. (2011) express that there are important differences between those who identify as trans (one's psychological identification as male, female, both, or neither) and those who identify as LGB (one's sexual orientation). Along with other scholars (e.g. Budge et al., 2010), they call for separate or secondary studies that focus exclusively on the "T" of LGBT. In light of this, research has emerged more recently that focuses specifically on bisexual (e.g., Köllen, 2013) and trans (e.g., Brower, 2016) employee experiences. In the present study, the aim was to capture as diverse a sample population as possible in order to highlight the heterogeneity of the LGBT+ population.

Second, research conducted in Japanese on LGBT+ workplace experiences in Japan has been overwhelmingly quantitative in design. Significant data has been collected in nation-wide surveys by research institutions such as the Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. and Dentsu Diversity Lab. In 2013, the NPO Nijiiro Diversity launched the *LGBT and workplace environment survey*; in collaboration with the Centre for Gender Studies at International Christian University (CGS) since 2014. Along with demographic indicators, there are questions related to coming out, experiences of harassment and allyship, the presence of LGBT-supportive policies, and, most recently, questions related to microaggressions, psychological safety, and mental health, as well as the impact of the corona virus on work and life outcomes. Correlations are made between key variables such as allyship and feelings of being isolated, and microaggressions and performance. The 2020 survey had a total of 2029 valid responses (Nijiiro Diversity: CGS, 2020). Although some of these surveys include space for participants to express their thoughts or feelings, they do not allow for the follow-up questioning and subsequent deeper understanding that in-depth interviews afford. Similarly, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (2017) released a white paper that included a collection of case studies detailing LGBT-related initiatives in nine organisations. Again, while these case studies provide useful examples of the ways in which organisations can better facilitate LGBT+ employees, only a superficial understanding of the individuals that are the target of these initiatives can be discerned. Two important Japanese language texts to come out are *Shokuba no LGBT tokuhon* (Yanagisawa et al., 2016) and *LGBT to rōmu* (Teshima et al., 2021). They both follow a similar format, with the first chapter in each taking the time to sensitise the reader to understandings of SOGI diversity. Then, the former presents findings from the 2014 round of the aforementioned LGBT and workplace environment survey, before detailing workplace issues for LGBT employees, case studies of company and local government initiatives, and a framework for a more LGBT-friendly workplace, and then closing with interviews with LGBT *tōjisha* and allies. *LGBT to rōmu* (Teshima et al., 2021) has chapters on LGBT policies and support, examples for developing company regulations, LGBT *tōjisha* case studies, relevant court cases, and company interviews. With practical and actionable information, these books may serve as a useful resource for companies. However, they are rather prescriptive in tone, and do not offer much in the way of theorising or a critique of existing organisational structures and power relations. The overall message of these books seems to be: "There are LGBT+ people in your organisation; this is what you need to know about them; here is how to deal with them".

In a rare instance of qualitative research, Kamano (2009) interviewed 11 lesbian couples about their work and financial situations. Histories of nonstandard employment and the different ways the couples managed their household income were detailed, and it was found that the participants' life courses were characterised by a tendency to drop out of school or discontinue a job due to discrimination. Another notable exception is the work of Ueno (2021), which examines the role of sexuality in career planning, career trajectories, and work experiences. In his qualitative study of young LGBQ people in Japan, interviews with 43 individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 revealed that macro-level conditions (i.e., occupational gender inequality and a strong social expectation for heterosexual marriage) created a sense of financial insecurity among LGBQ people who anticipated that they would deviate from the expectation. Furthermore, in order to sustain their employment in future workplaces, participants assumed that they would have to hide their sexual identities and, in the case of the participants who were non-binary, pass as cisgender. It was concluded that the career planning process for young LGBQ people in Japan is constrained by a social discourse that emphasises career stability as a determinant of work satisfaction and life quality. This is in contrast with young LGBQ people in the U.S., who feel unconstrained in career choices and optimistic about their career achievements regardless of their gender or sexuality (see Ueno et al., 2018). Recognising the paucity of rich qualitative data on Japanese LGBT+ employees such as this, a research design that focused on the lived experiences of the participants was imperative to the current study. Reflecting on the above, the following can be surmised: there is a need for more research on LGBT+ experiences in the workplace that considers perspectives beyond European and American contexts; research into "LGBT" subjectivities tends to favour the experiences of people who identify as lesbian and gay, with much less research focusing on bi, trans, and gender-nonconforming subjectivities; and in Japan the use of qualitative research methodologies to investigate LGBT+ workplace experiences is nascent. Straddling the diversity management and expatriate fields within MOS, the current inquiry breaks new ground on research fronts in both. Here intersectionality is positioned as vital in propelling the intellectual conversation forward in academia and, specifically in Japan, in starting a new conversation.

Notes

1. For example, in an opening address Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference against Racism, stated: "You are also, I know, aware of the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination – how gender intersects with race, how sexual orientation intersects with race, how poverty intersects with race. This is a dimension which is deservedly receiving particular attention at this Conference" (cited in Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2001).

Chapter 5 – Socio-historical Context

As recommended by Bowleg (2008) and others (e.g., Collins, 1990; McKinzie & Richards, 2019), intersectionality research should take the time to define clearly the socio-historical context within which the study is situated. An emphasis on context ensures that reification and depoliticisation are avoided and that social identity categories are considered within wider social, political, and geographical histories. Most importantly, by shifting the focus from subjectivities to social conditions, "context-driven intersectionality" (McKinzie & Richards, 2019) attends to systems of power and produces understandings of how institutions can be transformed to achieve social justice outcomes. Japan has been conceptualised as a *bundan shakai* ("divided society"; Saitō, 2006; Honda, 2015; Ide et al., 2016; Kikkawa, 2018; Shiobara, 2020). Kikkawa (2018) ascribes the following four criteria to *bundan*: (1) Overt boundaries between groups; (2) fixed group membership; (3) discontinuation of relationship between groups; and (4) unequal distribution of wealth and resources. Using the theoretical perspective of *bundan shakai*, the central thesis of *Cultural and social division in contemporary Japan: Rethinking discourses of inclusion and exclusion* (Eds. Shiobara, Kawabata, & Matthews, 2020), this chapter will demonstrate how, both historically and contemporaneously, Japanese society is characterised by division. Specifically, this macro-national level of analysis will show how the dichotomies of queer/straight and foreign/Japanese—and, to a lesser extent, woman/man—are maintained and (re)produced through the dominant ideologies of heteronormativity and *tan'itsu minzoku shakai*. The author is primarily concerned with the ways in which social identities are co-constructed through the performance of "normative" modes of expression in daily interactions. Based on the identification and subsequent categorisation of individuals, systems of privilege and oppression are perpetuated through socio-institutional mechanisms. Here the author calls out inconsistencies, problematising and critiquing so-called "common sense" ways categories such as gender and nationality are thought about and represented in everyday life. Along with *Cultural and social division in contemporary Japan* (2020), the exploration below will draw on information and insights from Japanese language-based sources, including news articles, survey data, government reports, books, comics, movies and other printed and digital media. It will also give voice to the research participants as they reflect on their experiences navigating various social institutions in Japan, as well as offer observations from the author's participation in several LGBT-related events over a two-year period.

5.1. Japan's queer history

At the risk of grave oversimplification, in Japanese history, gender and sexuality can be conceptualised in two distinct ways: gender and sexuality as practices and performance in "premodern" Japan, and gender and sexuality as (stable) categories or identities in "modern" Japan, with the beginning of the Meiji era in 1868 as the typical demarcation between the two (see, for example, Arai, 2014; Isaka, 2016). Importantly, by understanding queer subjectivities in Japan in this way, interpreting and analysing premodern instances of gender performance and same-sex sexual relations using a modern-day framework is avoided. In other words, terms like "lesbian" and "trans", and the meanings attached to them, reflect specific subject formations that are not universally or historically applicable. At the same time, by establishing this premodern/modern dichotomy the author is constructing boundaries, and creating an artificial divide. In reality, understandings of gender and sexuality across time are complex, plural, and non-linear. Boellstorff and Leap (2004) remind us that, "[t]here is no single term that completely embraces the wide range of sexual and gender diversities under discussion" (p. 4). Nonetheless, while not entirely adequate, as explained in chapter 1 (section 1.2.1), "queer" will be used here as an umbrella term in describing the wide range of roles, practices, and identities associated with transgenderism and same-sex desire in Japan. This reflects its usage in *Queer voices from Japan: First-person narratives from Japan's sexual minorities* (Eds. McLelland, Suganuma, & Welker, 2007). In the introduction, McLelland et al. (2007) note that queer is "a very apt translation" (p. 2) for the Japanese word *hentai*, which has been used to the same effect in Japanese language publications.[1] In recent years there has been a concerted effort to revive, reconstruct, and assert Japan's queer history as a unique contribution to queer studies and to wider understandings of the past. Here too, an overview of Japan's queer history is useful in situating the contemporary experiences of LGBT+ people in Japan. In general, queer people lack "the institutions for common memory and generational transmission" (Warner, 1999, p. 51) such as families, religious centres, schools, and community organisations, which are by and large built for and maintained by people who are cisgender and heterosexual. In particular, women's sexuality in Japan has historically been under-documented and under-studied (Akaeda, 2011; Sugiura, 2015).[2] In fact, Welker (2017) argues that, with regards to pre- and post-war sexological discourse on female queer practices, references to ancient Greece, and specifically the poet Sappho and the isle of Lesbos, were more common than references to the culture of the Edo period (1603-1867).[3] Below, the gender performance and sexual practices throughout Japanese history that can be read as queer through a contemporary lens will be identified. Key events that have shaped the discourse around LGBT+ subjectivities in modern-day Japan will also be discussed.

5.1.1 From practice to identity

Along with researching and documenting queer sexuality, the way gender is queered in Japan is a significant feature of Japanese history. For example, Kabuki was established at the beginning of the Edo period. In 1629, women, who had been playing both male and female roles from the outset, were legally banned from the stage on the grounds that they were associated with prostitution and later, in 1652, young boys playing female roles were banned for the same reason (Isaka, 2016). Thus, adult men came to play the female roles, otherwise known as *onnagata*. Kabuki theatre remained all-male, and *onnagata* actors were held up as exemplars of ideal feminine behaviour, evidently set fashion trends for women, and were even seen as objects of sexual desire for other men (Hachimonjiya, 1776/1969; Mezur, 2005; Isaka, 2016). Along with Kabuki, queer gender performance is also celebrated in *takarazuka kagekidan* (Takarazuka Revue), an all-female theatre founded in 1913, with *otokoyaku* ("male role") performers understood to embody the image of an "ideal" man (Nakamura & Matsuo, 2005). Takarazuka, like Kabuki, offers a site to examine not only gender, but also sexuality in the socio-historical context of Japan. In her historical analysis of early twentieth-century Takarazuka, Robertson (1998) asserts that Takarazuka inspires erotic desire in its fans that, while neither homosexual nor heterosexual , is nonetheless sexual in nature.[4] Meanwhile, in their ethnographic study of contemporary Takarazuka, Nakamura and Matsuo (2005) contend that the relationship between fans and performers create a space that is asexual and agendered within which "both female and male fans, regardless of their sexual orientations, can temporarily transcend their everyday gender expectations and roles" (p. 59). As discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.2.1) by understanding gender as a social construct, we can view it not as a static trait, but instead as a dynamic process. Today, Kabuki and Takarazuka maintain their relevance as vibrant forms of entertainment that ultimately reveal the performative nature of gender. This kind of gender play could perhaps be read as liberating and subversive, providing space to explore gender ambiguity and imagine alternative modes of doing gender, as Nakamura and Matsuo (2005) suggest. On the other hand, a more critical reading could arrive at the conclusion that by presenting idealised images of "women" and "men", Kabuki and Takarazuka reproduce gender hegemonies, with productions such as *The love of Izayoi and Seishin* (Mokuami, 1859/2015) and *Elisabeth: Rondo of love and death* (Kunze, 1992/2018) depicting heteronormative romantic relationships between unquestionably male and female characters.

Overall, premodern Japan can be characterised by, at least for men, relative sexual and gender fluidity, with scholars such as Leupp (1995) going so far as to suggest that “male bisexuality appears to have been the rule” (p. 4). To reiterate, “bisexuality” is used here anachronistically and refers to behaviour, not to identity. In fact, a blending of sexuality and gender seems apparent, with the term *futanarihira*—a portmanteau of *futanari* (lit. double-bodied; “androgyny”) and Ariwara no Narihira, a courtier of the Heian period (794-1185) known for his bisexuality—popularised in the Edo period to describe a man who appears as beautiful as a woman (Saikaku, 1687/1990). A separation of sexuality and morality seems to have facilitated the lack of stigma around same-sex sexual behaviours. Notably, premodern Japan lacked religious or criminal persecution of male-male sexual practices (Ujiie, 1995). Major religions in Japan such as Buddhism and Shintō do not have a moral system that is hostile to homosexuality (Faure, 1998; Mitsuhashi, 2008; Kasai, 2015). During the Edo period, as Schalow (1990) suggests: “Sexuality was simply another aspect of social life that provided a forum for proving one’s sophistication and culture” (p. 6). Discourse on same-sex sexual relations in Japan is most strongly associated with a codified set of practices known as *nanshoku* (“male eroticism”). *Nanshoku* is hierarchically structured and role-based, and was purportedly introduced from China in the ninth century by Kūkai, founder of Shingon Buddhism in Japan (Schalow, 1990; Leupp, 1995). It was practiced from at least as early as the Kamakura period (1185-1333), spreading from monastic life to the samurai and eventually, by the Edo period, to the *chōnin* (“townspeople”; Shibayama, 1992).[5] Importantly, *nanshoku* does not describe male-male sexual relations between adults. While relationships between adult men (and between women) could have existed, this was not the norm. Instead, *nanshoku* describes the sexual (and fidelitous) relationships between men and *wakashū* (“youths”; Schalow, 1990).

Wakashū have been referred to as Japan’s “third gender” (e.g., Mostow, 2003), and *shūdo* (“the way of youths”), as established by the samurai, reached its peak during the Edo period. What distinguished the *wakashū* was not necessarily their age—although most were around 15 to 20 years old—but their clothes and hairstyle: colourful open-sleeved kimono, and a topknot and *maegami* (forelocks), with a small shaved portion at the crown of the head (Pflugfelder, 1999). As objects of desire, they were appreciated by both men and women for their masculine beauty. After completing *genpuku* (a coming of age ceremony), which did not have a prescribed age, the *wakashū* would become a man and take on the *chonmage* hairstyle. Leupp (1995) avers that *nanshoku* was part of the normative framework: “…heterosexual relationships, including marriage, were widely viewed as compatible, even complementary, with male-male sexual activity” (p. 3). The nature of these relationships is most famously depicted in Ihara Saikaku’s *nanshoku ōkagami*

("The great mirror of male love"), which was published in 1687. The book is a collection of 40 short stories, the first half about samurai *wakashū*, and the second half about kabuki *wakashū* (Schalow, 1990). Evidently, female same-sex relations did not enjoy this same level of prestige and "connoisseurship". Indeed, *joshoku* ("female eroticism"), the antonym of *nanshoku*, does not refer to female-female sexual relations, but instead to male-female sexual relations. Chalmers (2002) avers that "female homosexuality was not sanctioned" (p. 19) in Edo Japan. On the other hand, in *Erottiku Nihonshi* (Shimokawa, 2016) the existence of double-headed olisbos called *tagaigata*, evidently to be used by two women, is documented (see also Leupp, 1995). Across Japan at varying rates, *nanshoku* became increasingly commercialised, associated with prostitution and pleasure-seeking establishments such as *kagemajaya* ("male brothels"). With this commercialisation came increased scrutiny, and by the eighteenth century, *nanshoku* brothel districts were designated by the authorities as *akusho* (lit. bad places) (Leupp, 1995). Pflugfelder (1999) notes the disparity in legislation governing male-male sexuality between the metropolis of Edo, the castle towns, and the countryside, as well as between the classes.[6] The diverse legal discourse governing male-male sexuality in the Edo period gave way to a more uniform regime of sexual regulation in the Meiji era.

The *meiji ishin* (Meiji Restoration) of 1868 brought sweeping and profound change to Japan after over 250 years of relative peace and stability under the rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate (see, for example, Banno, 2012 for historical overview). Part of this change, as articulated in many texts (e.g., Ujiie, 1995; Ishida et al., 2005), was a shift in attitudes toward same-sex practices. Furukawa (1994) articulates this as a shift from the *nanshoku* code to the *hentai seiyoku* ("perverse sexual desire") code. Medico-scientific systems of thought, propagated by the likes of sexologists Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis, and the writings of Mori Ōgai (1909), came to be incorporated into Japanese understandings of sexuality, and an *ijō*/*seijō* ("abnormal/normal") dichotomy that applied to sexuality and to people was established (Leupp, 1995; McLelland et al., 2007).[7] Pflugfelder (2007) is quick to shut down the notion that Japan was merely a passive recipient of knowledge from the west, critical of orientalist tendencies.[8] Instead, he insists that the medico-scientific model of understanding sexual behaviour rose to prominence in Japan, Europe, and North America concurrently, and that Japanese sexologists were "active participants in a global network of sexual knowledge in which they were not only tutees but mentors as well" (p. 13). With the essentialisation of gender and sexuality came new forms of division and exclusion in society. "Civilised morality" was characterised by male-female sexuality and monogamous marriage, and laws to regulate gender expression, which had precedent in Edo period Japan, strengthened (Pflugfelder, 1999). Significantly, in 1873, anal sex was criminalised with the aim to protect young boys and to curb male-male violence and rape. Subsequently, under the supervision of French jurist Gustave Boissonade, a new penal code was introduced in 1881 in which anal sex between consenting adults was decriminalised (Furukawa, 1994; McLelland, 2000). Thus, although obscenity laws increased in scope, a degree of tolerance was afforded toward same-sex practices, as long as they remained private. Of course, tolerance does not equate to being accepted as normal practice. As Shimizu (2007) puts it, Japanese society has been tolerant of queer sexualities "only as far as they are kept outside the sphere of daily normality and do not start questioning the line of demarcation or threatening the normal, existing system of society and family that has been supplemented, and therefore supported, by the abnormal" (p. 507). A catalyst for an epistemological turn in the understanding of homosexuality in Japan, on the 26th of July 1911, two graduates of women's schools committed *shinjū* (lovers' suicide), drowning themselves off the coast of Oyashirazu in Niigata Prefecture (Hiruma, 2003).[9] Articles that followed had titles such as *senritsu subeki no josei kan no tentō seiyoku* ("fearsome sexual inversion among women") and *osoru beki dōsei no ai* ("dreadful same-sex love"), seemingly pathologising homosexuality (Wu, 2007). Love between women was seen as a direct threat to the patriarchy and to the *ryōsai kenbo shugi* (doctrine of "good wives, wise mothers"), which normalised compulsory heterosexuality and reproduction as the ultimate aim of members of society. Furukawa (1994) argues that the discourse surrounding the lover's suicide case was influential in making *dōseiai* the fixed term defining same-sex relationships. While male-male sexual practices had long been understood and categorised as *nanshoku*, previously inconceivable queer sexuality among women had entered public consciousness as an outcome of an act deemed revolting.[10]

Consequently, during the Taishō era (1912-1926) male and female same-sex sexuality were collapsed into the term *dōseiai* (lit. same sex love, i.e., "homosexuality") in opposition to the "normal" or "healthy" *iseiai* ("heterosexuality"; Wu, 2007; McLelland et al. 2007). The earlier introduction of the *ie seido* ("household system") in 1898 had established binary gender roles, which were further solidified during this period. Due to a strong Confucian influence, maintenance and continuation of family came to be considered the most important aspect of Japanese society (Sano & Yasumoto, 2014). The role of women was reduced to *bosei* (motherhood) and the role of men to breadwinner. Although the *ie seido* was replaced by the revised *koseki seido* ("family registration system") in 1947, Kubo (2020) notes that the patriarchal and multigenerational housing customs enshrined in *ie seido*, which included the eldest son inheriting the family home from the father while continuing to live with the parents, have persisted. The militarisation of the Empire of Japan in the early Shōwa era (1926-1989) further divided women and men as women were encouraged to *umeyo fuyaseyo* ("bear children and multiply") and men were drafted into the war effort (McLelland et al., 2007). As social organisation became increasingly homosocial, homosexual relationships, such as those between senior soldiers and younger recruits, inevitably occurred in spite of the virulent heterosexual and pronatal ideology of the time. Following World War II, Japan was subjugated by the Americans who developed the *Nihonkoku kenpō* (Constitution of Japan; 1947), now the oldest unamended constitution in the world. With the American occupation came the terms lesbian and gay, which were deployed alongside Japanese terms like *onabe* and *okama*.[11] Crucially, these terms were used self-referentially to communicate identity.[12] For example, politician, gay bar owner, and magazine editor—among other things—Tōgō Ken (1932-2012) was a self-proclaimed *okama* (Oikawa, 2007). *Hentai* magazines such as *fūzoku zōshi* ("customs notebook"), as well as gay bars, which proliferated during the 1950s, became important sites of discourse and community for queer people in Japan (Ishida & Murakami, 2006; Welker, 2010). *Gei* (gay) or *gei boi* (gay boy) came to denote bar workers who engaged in cross-dressing to entertain clientele or men who otherwise dressed and acted effeminately while more gender-normative queer men were referred to as *homo* (from "homosexual"; McLelland et al., 2007). McLelland (2007) notes that a variety of foreign and indigenous terms were used, often interchangeably, to describe categories of sexuality in post-war Japan, and advocates for a "hybridization model" in framing and understanding transnational forms of sexual knowledge. As such, categories and labels can be seen as fluid and contextual, with meanings and connotations attached that can shift through both local and global transformation.

5.1.2 The many booms

The second half of the Shōwa era was marked by several pronounced spikes in public curiosity in and mass media coverage of queer people in Japan. This is also the point at which queer people in Japan began to mobilise politically by asserting their identities through activism and producing their own knowledge as *tōjisha* (see section 1.2.1). The first of these media *būmu* (booms), was the so-called "blue-boy boom" (McLelland et al., 2007). Starting with the first *seibetsu tekigō shujutsu* (sex reassignment surgery [SRS]) in Japan, carried out on entertainer Nagai Akiko in 1951, the 1950s saw other trans entertainers, including Miwa Akihiro and Carrousel Miki, rise to prominence and begin their gender confirmation journeys. In 1964, the French cabaret Le Carrousel de Paris, which featured transsexual dancers known as "blue boys",[13] started their

Japan tour. Then, in 1965, in what came to be referred to as the "Blue boy trial", a Japanese surgeon who had performed SRS on three people (assigned male at birth) was prosecuted for crimes against the 1948 *yūsei hogo hō* (Eugenic Protection Law; Ishida & Murakami, 2006; Itani, 2011). As a result of the 1970 trial, the Eugenic Protection Law (currently, the Maternal Protection Law after revision in 1996) was interpreted in such a way as to forbid surgery that interfered with otherwise properly functioning sexual organs. Meanwhile, Sugiura (2015) designates the late 1960s, which saw the mainstream uptake of the word *lezubian* (and its derivatives, such as "*rezu*") in publications, as a "lesbian boom". Welker (2017) notes that while some of the earlier titles, such as *lesbian love* (Narabayashi, 1967) and *lesbian technique* (Akiyama, 1968), were written by men and have a pathologising tone toward homosexuality, later volumes were written by self-identified lesbian women, including Kiyooka (1969), who sought to represent lesbians in a positive light. At once inspired by and at times at odds with the broader feminist movement in Japan, lesbian activism flourished in the 1970s and 1980s, with communities forming around groups like *Wakakusa no Kai* (1971-1985) and *Regumi Sutajio Tokyo* (1987-2013; Sawabe, 2007; Hisada, 2007). A culmination of this activism, as well as a pioneering text in its own right, *Onna o ai suru onnatach no monogatari* ("Stories of women who love women", 1987) was written by Sawabe Hitomi using the penname Hirosawa Yumi (Welker, 2017). Based on interviews and a survey of 234 lesbians, the book offers an overview of the community and insights into living in Japan as a lesbian and was, in Sawabe's (2008) own words, intended to "dispel the pornographic image of lesbians promoted in the mass media" (p. 14). As explained by Kakefuda (1992), the terms *rezu* and *rezubian* have been associated with pornography that targets and is consumed by straight men since the 1960s. Thus, an enduring reluctance on the part of queer women in Japan to adopt "lesbian" as a label surfaced (see also Horie, 2008).

Also in the 1980s, *nyūhāfu*, a combination of the English words "new" and "half"—already a signifier of people who are of mixed race—came to be adopted as a self-designation by many transgender performers (McLelland, 2004). The year 1981 heralded the "new half boom", with trans women like Matsubara Rumiko enjoying success in the media and presenting the general public with the idea that "feminised men … whose bodies might be male but whose hearts were female … [a] state evident from birth" were distinct from homosexual men (Ishida & Murakami, 2006, para. 37; see also Mitsuhashi, 2003). In other words, the identity category *nyūhāfu* diverged from the identity category *gei*, thus disambiguating gender identity and sexual orientation. While *gei* had previously referred to cross-dressing or effeminate men (see section 5.1.1), in a linguistic turn it came to describe a largely gender-normative homosexual man, (re)incorporating western (mostly U.S.) understandings. A major catalyst for the emergence of a "normative" gay identity and community was the AIDS crisis of the 1980s (Kazama 1997; Shingae 2013). In the ensuing waves of "AIDS panic", particular groups of people, including haemophiliacs, gay men, and male and female foreign sex workers, were pronounced high risk by the government and the media (Moriyama, 2017). Although the first officially reported AIDS case in Japan was a gay Japanese man who had returned from the United States in 1985, outbreaks among haemophiliacs had already begun as a result of contaminated blood products imported from the U.S. (Hirokawa, 1993; Kazama, 1997). In this way, AIDS, and the stigma attached, became associated primarily with gay men and foreigners (Vincent, 1996; Buckley, 1997; Iino, 2008). Considered the most successful of all Japanese gay organisations (McLelland, 2005), *Ugoku Gei to Rezubian no Kai* (1986-), or OCCUR, was founded as a youth support group in the wake of this stigmatisation. OCCUR incorporated a variety of discourses and strategies that had been developed in the context of the U.S. gay liberation movement (Ishida & Murakami, 2006). Indeed, the Heisei era (1989-2019) is characterised by a marked focus on establishing the visibility and rights of LGBT+ people within existing legal and social structures of Japan. In what came to be known as the *fuchu seinen no ie* ("Fuchu Youth House") trail, in 1991, OCCCUR sued the Tokyo metropolitan government in response to its decision to bar them access to the eponymous public facility (Kazama & Kawaguchi, 2010). This was after OCCUR members had faced harassment in the preceding month, such as being called *homo* and *okama* by members of other groups using the facility during a study camp in 1990, as well as being told by the director of the facility that it was inappropriate for them, as "homosexuals", to use the facility. The Tokyo District Court and the Tokyo Court of Appeal both ruled in favour of OCCUR, and in doing so acknowledged the equivalence of homosexuals and heterosexuals before the law (Yanagisawa et al., 2016). OCCUR also campaigned for changes in negative definitions of homosexuality in dictionaries and encyclopaedias. Subsequently, the term "sexual abnormality" was removed from the definition of homosexuality in the 4th edition of the Kōjien released in 1991.

The "gay boom" of the early 1990s saw the publication of *Puraibēto gei raifu* (Private gay life; 1991) by Fushimi Noriaki, an openly gay man, and *"Rezubian" de aru to iu koto* (On being a "lesbian"; 1992) by Kakefuda Hiroko, an openly lesbian woman, as well as the coming out of singer-songwriter Sasano Michiru in 1995.[14] The non-pathological term *seiteki shikō* (sexual orientation), which was already being deployed by OCCUR, appeared more widely, and homosexuality started to become less aligned with "perverse" sexual desire, and more aligned with the image of a "normal" person who just happens to have a different sexual orientation from people who are heterosexual (Ishida & Murakami, 2006). Discourse around coming out as a political act was established in the media, as well as in academia, with *gei sutadīzu* (Gay studies; Vincent et al., 1997) as an important text in the burgeoning field of queer studies in Japan. Defined as "the knowledge conducted by gay people as *tōjisha*, for gay people to think about themselves" (p. 2), in *Gay Studies* Vincent and colleagues analyse homophobia and heteronormative social structures in Japan, and offer avenues of resistance. This education and dissemination of "correct knowledge" extended to the integration of sexual orientation and gender identity into a single cohesive model (see, for example, Itō, 1996). Increased visibility also came with the introduction of larger-scale LGBT-related events. The first *Tokyo International Gay and Lesbian film festival* was held in 1992, and in 1994, the International Lesbian and Gay Association in Japan, supervised by gay activist Minami Teishirō, launched its first *Tokyo Lesbian Gay Parade* (Mclelland et al., 2007; Yanagisawa et al., 2016). Subsequently, other cities, starting with Sapporo in 1996, began to organise their own pride events. Also in 1996, *the Nihon Seishin Shinkei Gakkai* (Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology) designated SRS as the medical treatment for gender identity disorder (GID; Mackie 2001; Ishida 2002). Japan's first case of SRS as a treatment for GID was performed at the Saitama Medical University in 1998, gaining significant media attention (Itani, 2011). Subsequently, in 2000, Nōno Chieko, a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party formed a "GID study group", tasked to examine the current situation for people diagnosed with GID in Japan and overseas. In 2002, an AFAB high school student who identified as trans male was featured on the popular television drama *San nen B gumi no Kinpachi Sensei* (Teacher Kinpachi from Class 3B). Dale (2018) writes that since then, coverage of trans issues in variety shows and news programs used the term "GID", and had been framed in a "sympathetic manner". Parallel to the emergence of GID discourse, the term *x jendā* (x-gender), which can describe people who identify as non-binary, surfaced in the queer communities of the Kansai Region, and subsequently spread throughout Japan via the Internet (Dale, 2012). The "x" was incorporated into existing acronyms used when talking about trans identities, rendering FtX (female to X), MtX (male to X), and XtX (used in the case of intersex individuals or otherwise by those who have never identified as female or male; see also Arai, 2016). While figures like Tōgō Ken had had political aspirations (see Oikawa, 2007), it was not until the early 2000s that political representation of LGBT+ people bore fruit. Kamikawa Aya was elected as an openly transgender politician in the Setagaya City assembly Tokyo in 2003, having contributed to the establishment of the *seidōitsusei shōgai tokureihō* (Act on Special Cases for Gender Identity Disorder; hereinafter referred to as the Special Act on GID) which was ratified in July that year, and subsequently came into effect in July 2004 (discussed further section 5.2.2).[15] Osaka prefectural assembly member Otsuji Kanako came out in 2005, and subsequently became Japan's first openly lesbian member of the National Diet in 2013. Ishikawa Taiga and Ishizaka Wataru were elected as openly gay cis male politicians for Tokyo's Toshima and Nakano City councils respectively in 2011 (Chi, 2016), and in 2017 Hosoda Tomoya became the first trans man to be elected to office (Rich, 2017).

5.1.3 Expanding visibility

At a time of high levels of connection to global networks through the Internet and social media, and mainstream commercialisation and marketisation of the LGBT+ community, new challenges and new opportunities for the LGBT+ movement, as well as for LGBT+ individuals living and working in Japan, have presented themselves. The most recent boom, the "LGBT boom", came after the introduction of Shibuya's same-sex partnership ordinance in 2015, and brought with it a new wave of visibility. In a very public display, the first recipients of the same-sex union certificate were former takarasiennne Higashi Koyuki and entrepreneur Masuhara Hiroko, who had already become a high profile couple after holding a wedding ceremony at Tokyo Disney Resort in 2012 (Ripley, 2015; Yanagisawa et al., 2016). Tokyo Lesbian Gay Parade, and later Tokyo Lesbian & Gay Pride, ran non-consecutive years, as the organisations that managed the event suffered from a male-dominated, sexist leadership and staff that silenced diverse voices, as well as a lack of funding (see Itakura, 2015). Moreover, the name of the festival was criticised for excluding trans and bisexual people despite their participation in the event. Under new management, *Tokyo Rainbow Pride* (TRP) emerged as the newest iteration of Tokyo's annual pride festival (Itakura, 2015). In a similar fashion, in 2015, in order to be more inclusive, the name of the movie festival "Tokyo International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival" was changed to "Rainbow Reel Tokyo" with new management of the same name (Rainbow Reel Tokyo, n.d.). TRP was established as a private organisation in 2011 by Sugiyama Fumino and Yamada Natsumi, and in 2015 it became incorporated as an NPO (Tokyo Rainbow Pride, n.d.). According to the TRP website, the 2015 "parade & festa", which was held in the Yoyogi Park Event Space, attracted a crowd of 60,000, with 300 people participating in the parade, which made its way through the streets of Shibuya. Itakura (2015) notes how, while in previous years there was a ban on photography during the parade, participants in the 2015 parade were instructed to wear hats or sunglasses if they preferred not be photographed, signalling a shift toward individual responsibility of identity protection. Also in 2015, the photo project "Out in Japan" was launched by NPO Good Aging Yells.[16] For the project, which was sponsored by American clothing retailer GAP, photographer Leslie Kee aimed to take photographs of 10,000 people who identified as LGBT before 2020, when the Olympic Games were set to be hosted in Tokyo (UNAIDS, 2015; Yanagisawa et al., 2016). With the slogan, “Your shining figure will be the courage of the next person”, the black and white photos featured individuals, couples, and families, and the name, age, occupation, birthplace, and sexual and/or gender identity of each the models were provided on the project’s website.[17]

In January 2018, the 7th edition of the Kōjien dictionary was published and included a definition for “LGBT” for the first time: “individuals whose sexual orientation differs from the majority”. Some were quick to criticise publisher Iwanami Shoten for the definition, which only describes the "LGB" portion of the acronym (Brasor, 2018). Soon after, the definition was revised to, “in broad terms, people whose sexual orientations are not heterosexual or people whose gender identity does not match the sex they were identified with at birth” (“Publishers of Japan’s most”, 2018). In May of that year, Kenmoku Shogo, the first delegate for the Mr. Gay World competition, attended the competition in Knysna, South Africa.[18] It was an opportunity for Japan to be a part of the celebration and empowerment of gay men, with delegates building an international presence, and becoming leaders in the advocacy of LGBT+ rights. In celebration of the passing of the Tokyo Metropolitan Governments anti-discrimination ordinance—discussed further in section 5.2.2—the *Tokyo Love Parade* was held in October 2018 (Maree 2020). Following a series of protests, this impromptu celebration was held in response to incendiary remarks made by Sugita Mio earlier that year, which precipitated in a series of protests staged by a coalition of “unproductives” (see section 5.2.3). Sponsored by NPO Tokyo Rainbow Pride, it was held in Shinjuku and attended by about 500 participants, including people living with disabilities and members of the LGBT community (Udagawa, 2018). In August 2019, the Tokyo Tyrants became International Gay Rugby’s (IGR) first member from Asia with Associate Membership, with Osaka Inclusive Rugby becoming the second shortly thereafter (International Gay Rugby [IGR], 2020). On the 4th of October 2019, Japanese Rugby Football Union and IGR signed a joint memorandum of understanding, with Abe Akie, wife of then prime minister Abe Shinzō, in attendance. The memorandum included protective legislature and a framework designed to prevent and deter discrimination within rugby (McElhinney, 2019). The next day, IGR and the World Barbarians Foundation hosted the International Inclusive Challenge to help promote Rugby within the gay and inclusive Rugby community as part of the IGR #PrideInRugby Anniversary Weekend (IGR, 2020).

Having revolutionised the way that people gather information, connect, express themselves, and form community, Information and communications technologies gave queer people in Japan new outlets to share their experiences, and assert their identities. For example, in 2018, business professional Katsuma Kazuyo (see Furuta, 2018) opened up publicly about her sexuality on her personal blog. She expressed that her coming out was an “opportunity for society to change” (see Yamashita, 2018). Similarly, on the 25th of June, 2021, singer/songwriter Utada Hikaru came out as non-binary during an Instagram live session (Lee wei, 2021). Utada uses “she/they” pronouns. A week earlier in a post on Instagram, they expressed that:

> I’m sick of being asked if I’m “Miss or Missus” or choosing between “Miss/Mrs/Ms” for everyday things. It makes me uncomfortable to be identified so markedly by my marital status or sex, and I don’t relate to any of those prefixes. Every time, I feel like I’m forced to misrepresent myself (Utada, 2021).

In subsequent interviews, Utada spoke about her decision to come out. In an interview with Zane Lowe of Apple Music, Utada described coming across the word “non-binary” as their moment of epiphany, one that was incredibly validating. She continued: “I knew it would be very misunderstood in Japan, because the discussion around things like that, it’s just not really quite there yet”. After its successful bid in 2013, Japan scrambled to align itself with the requirements stipulated by the International Olympic Committee and accommodate the needs of LGBT+ people (discussed further in section 5.2.2). Part of securing its legacy as a country that is seen to value diversity was the establishment of the Pride House Tokyo Legacy, Japan’s first permanent LGBTQ centre, which was opened by Good Aging Yells in October 2020.[19] A multipurpose space capable of hosting a variety of online and offline events, the centre was described as “a safe and secure place to broadcast information on and by the LGBTQ community” (Pride House Tokyo, n.d.). Branded as Tokyo 2020, the Games of the 32nd Olympiad were held in Tokyo in the summer of 2021 (they were delayed one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Media outlets such as the BBC (Cai, 2021) and Forbes (Hart, 2021) reported on the record number of out Olympic and Paralympic athletes competing, with Buzinski (2021) of Outsports hailing Tokyo 2020 as the “gay(est), bi(est), lesbian(est), trans(est), queer(est), and nonbinary(est) Olympics ever”. However, articles in The Japan Times (Bauer, 2021) and The New York Times (Rich & Hida 2021) noted that Japan did not have any out Olympians. Promising and promised legislation to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity nationwide had ultimately been blocked by conservative lawmakers.

In this overview of Japan’s queer history, it can be seen that Japan has always been an active participant in transnational (re)production of queer knowledge. Examining the process of constructing a *nenpyō* (“timeline”) in the context of a Tokyo-based feminist group, Yamaguchi (2005) concludes that timelines are not simply collections of “raw”, politically neutral facts, but rather "carefully constructed, juxtaposed, and orchestrated distillations of events, and part of a project of history-making and remembering that is, depending on the editors, either politically charged or politically undercharged" (p. 56). In this way, history becomes consumable and knowable. What is included as well as what is not included reveals much about the particular story being told and who is telling it. Welker (2017) argues that in the case of the LGBT+ community, timelines are clearly political declarations of relevance. Thus, the telling of history, this author's telling included, is always tied to a political agenda. In the current text, the author set out to allocate approximately equal weight to the discussion of each of the identities represented by "LGBT". However, it is clear that people who identify as bisexual are dismally underrepresented in this project. In the Japanese lexicon, historical terms that connote bisexuality seem be most strongly associated with men. For example, according to the Men and Women Etymology Study Group (2018), the word *ryōtōtsukai* (lit. dual blade wielder) became popularised as a slang term for bisexual men after Tatsumi Ryūtarō's 1952 portrayal of *kensei* ("sword-saint") Miyamoto Musashi, who invented a style of swordsmanship that involved holding a sword in each hand. The more neutral term *ryōseiai* (lit. both sex love) seems to follow the structural precedent set by *dōseiai* ("homosexuality"), while the more contemporary identity category is a transliteration of the English word "bisexual", rendering *baisekushuaru*, *baiseku*, or simply *bai* (Arai, 2016). Beyond this, in either English or Japanese language publications, the author was unable to find substantial narratives of bisexuality in Japanese history. Books that included a "Japanese LGBT history" section (e.g., McLelland et al., 2007; Yanagisawa et al., 2016) tended to discuss the experiences of gay men and trans women at length, feature lesbian women from time to time, and relegate bisexuality to practice in pre-modern Japan. Certainly, this can be seen to reflect wider issues around bisexual identity, such as the lack of a designated bisexual community, stereotypes of sexual promiscuity, as well as the very legitimacy of "bisexual" as a sexual orientation being questioned; being bisexual troubles the binary homosexual/heterosexual system. The participants in the current inquiry who identified as bisexual (and pansexual) expressed that they found it challenging to communicate their identity to others, that it could be difficult to fit into the wider LGBT community, and that their sexuality was often erased when presenting as a couple (i.e. people in "same-sex" relationships were automatically assumed to be "gay", while people in "opposite sex" relationships were automatically assumed to be "straight"). Bi-erasure is pervasive not only in representation (see section 3.3.2), but also in academic knowledge production, as discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.3.3). It is the hope that this paper can, to some small extent, give a voice to the historically underrepresented.

5.2 SOGI diversity and society

5.2.1 Surveys of attitudes and discrimination

As highlighted in section 5.1.1, Japanese society has historically been characterised as tolerant toward homosexuality, mainly due to the lack of explicit legal or religious persecution. In contemporary society, studies of population-based attitudes toward LGBT+ people in Japan reveal a shift in attitudes over the past twenty years. Participants in the World Values Survey (WVS) were asked if they thought homosexuality could always be justified, never be justified, or somewhere in between, on a 10-point scale. Comparing the Wave 4 (2005-2009) (Inglehart et al., 2014) and Wave 7 (2017-2022) (Haerpfer et al., 2022) surveys, in the first, 21.5 per cent of Japanese respondents thought that homosexuality could never be justified and 8.1 per cent thought it could always be justified, while in the second, the percentages were 8.6 and 26.5, respectively; a complete reversal.[20] Meanwhile, looking at the results of the latest Global Attitudes Survey (Pew Research Center, 2020), it can be seen that 68 per cent of respondents of the 2019 survey felt that homosexuality should be accepted by society. This represented a 14-point increase since the 2002 survey. A noticeable difference in attitudes became apparent when segmenting the sample by age. Ninety-two per cent and 81 per cent of respondents aged 18 to 29 and 30 to 49, respectively, believed that homosexuality should be accepted by society, compared with 56 per cent of those aged 50 and older; Japan is 2nd behind South Korea for largest generational gap in attitudes. This was reflected in a survey by Marriage for All Japan (Ishida et al., 2020) that targeted people aged 40 to 69 (*n* = 1495). Those who were indicated that they were women, as well as those who were younger, were more likely to support or somewhat support same-sex marriage than those who were men or older. Further, 13.1 per cent of respondents indicated that they had changed their mind, and were now supportive of same-sex marriage. Reasons for change in attitude included “trend of the times” (30.8%), “media exposure” (24.8%), and “acquired knowledge” (11.3%).

Regarding other reports on attitudes around same-sex marriage and parenting, as already stated in chapter 2 (section 2.2.4), a 2018 Dentsu Diversity Lab (DDL) survey found that 78.4 per cent of people approve of same-sex marriage (Dentsu Inc., 2019). In a country-wide survey on “attitudes toward sexual minorities” using non-probability sampling (*n* = 2626), 64.8 per cent of the respondents “supported” or “somewhat supported” same-sex marriage, an increase of 13.6 percentage points since 2015 (Kamano et al., 2020). By age, 81 per cent of those in their 20s and 30s, 74 per cent of those in their 40s and 50s, and 47.2 per cent of those in their 60s and 70s, respectively, were in favour. Compared to the 2015 survey, the largest increase in approval was among people in their 40s and 50s, an increase of 19 points. Meanwhile, looking at reports of cross-country data, a survey conducted by Ipsos (2021) indicated that in Japan support for same-sex marriage grew from 24 per cent in 2013 to 40 per cent in 2021. Support for same-sex couples' right to adopt also increased in Japan, from 59 per cent to 68 per cent. Meanwhile, in the WVS Wave 7, a question asked if the respondent believed if homosexual couples are as good parents as other couples (Haerpfer et al., 2022). For Japan, the following spread was reported (*n* = 1353): "Strongly agree" (8.8%); "agree" (35.0%); "neither agree nor disagree" (23.1%); "disagree" (7.6%); "strongly disagree" (2.4%); "don't know" (22.8%); and "no answer" (0.2.%). Of the 51 countries represented, Japan had the highest percentage of "don't know" recorded, possibly alluding to the overall lack of knowledge and exposure people have to families with same-sex parents in Japan. Finally, regarding knowledge of the term "LGBT", a 2019 survey by Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. (2019) indicated that 91 per cent of respondents had heard the term ("*ninchisha*"), and 57.1 per cent had understanding of it ("*rikaisha*"). This represented a 36.6-point and 24.4-point increase, respectively, since the 2016 survey. This increase over time was reflected in the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (2016) survey and the DDL survey (Dentsu, Inc., 2019). Comparing the two, men (47.4%) were slightly more likely than women (46.8%) to know the term in the former, while in the later the reverse was true. In both surveys, younger people were more likely than older people to know the term. Looking at the surveys cited, there is a lack of data that captures the experiences of people who are bisexual and/or trans, with a clear focus on questions related to "homosexuality" and "same-sex marriage". While cross-country surveys on attitudes toward "homosexuals" have been conducted since 1981, the first survey to include data on attitudes toward transgender people was conducted in 2012, and no nationwide or cross-country survey has captured data on attitudes toward bisexual people (OECD, 2019). Taken together, these data point to the conclusion that SOGI diversity is becoming increasingly accepted in Japanese society. It may be assumed that talking about gender identity and sexuality, within and outside the workplace, is easy for people who are LGBT+. However, despite the apparent positive trends, LGBT+ people continue to report experiences of harassment, lack of support, and discrimination. Several Japan-based surveys are of particular relevance here.

Firstly, the 2018 survey conducted by DDL found that, of those who identified as LGBT (*n* = 589), 50.7 per cent of respondents were "reticent" or "somewhat reticent" to come out to their colleagues at work, including bosses and subordinates (Dentsu Inc., 2019). Additionally, regarding SOGI diversity support systems in the workplace, the LGBT segment responded thusly: "sufficient support systems" (5.5%); "insufficient support systems" (10.8%); "no support systems" (54.5%);

and “don’t know” (29.2). This was reflected in the current inquiry, with the majority of respondents in study 1 indicating that, to their knowledge, there were no LGBT-related policies or resources in their workplaces (see also appendix C and D). In the *LGBT ishiki kōdō chōsa 2019* (Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc., 2019), 83.9 per cent of respondents indicated that there was no one in their daily life (*mi no mawari*), including family and friends, who was LGBT (*n* = 2574). Further, 29.4 per cent and 36.6 percent of the non-LGBT segment did not know how to approach and did not know what kind of consideration (*hairyo*) is necessary, respectively, when communicating with people who are LGBT (*n* = 989; weighted sample = 2351). Meanwhile, of the LGBT segment, 52.8 per cent thought that there were a lot of misconceptions and prejudices against LGBT people, and 53.4 per cent thought that understanding should be promoted (*n* = 1585; weighted sample = 223). Regarding harassment, a survey by the *Nihon rōdōkumiai sōrengōkai* (Japanese Trade Union Confederation; commonly known as RENGO) with a sample of 1000 people, eight per cent of whom were LGBT, provides several key data. In response to the question “Have you experienced, or otherwise observed an instance of harassment on the basis of LGBT identity in the workplace (including at drinking parties)”, 22.9 percent of the sample indicated that they had: “heard indirectly” (15.3%); “witnessed directly” (7.6%); and “experienced directly as *tōjisha*”(1.3%) (RENGO, 2016). Dividing the sample by familiarity (*mijikasa*) with LGBT *tōjisha*, those who were familiar (*n* = 190) were almost four times more likely to have experienced, seen, or heard about LGBT harassment, than those who were unfamiliar (*n* = 810). Experiencing or observing instances of treatment such as dismissal, demotion, or transfer (*haichi tenkan*) due to LGBT identity yielded the following spread: “heard indirectly” (8.1%); “witnessed directly” (2.9%), and; “experienced directly as *tōjisha*”(0.9%). In this case, those familiar were more than six times more likely to have experienced or observed LGBT-related discrimination than those who were unfamiliar, the inference here being that those who are unfamiliar fail to recognise that harassment against LGBT+ people actually exists (Terahara, 2018). When asked about their thoughts with regards to the origin (*genin*) of this harassment, 59.5 per cent of respondents selected “discrimination and prejudice”, 43.3 per cent selected “gender norms mindset (‘men’ should be like this, ‘women’ like that, etc.)”, and 18.1 per cent selected “work environment characterised by lack of understanding”; each participant could select up to three responses.

Meanwhile, a report compiling the data of nijiVOICE surveys conducted over a three year period (2018-2020), representing a total of 7162 respondents, showed that instances of discriminatory words and actions have somewhat decreased for cisgender LGBPA+[21] people, transgender people, and cisgender heterosexual people (Kimura et al., 2021). Comparing the groups, it could be seen that LGBT people reported higher amounts of discrimination than cis-het people. As for accounts of specific instances of harassment and discrimination, in 2019, the *LGBT hōrengōkai* (Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation [J-ALL])[22] released the 3rd edition of its "*LGBT konnan risuto*" ("List of LGBT hardships"), which can be contributed to via a Google form accessible on their webpage. A total of 354 submissions were compiled in the latest edition, spanning hardships faced by queer individuals in a variety of settings, including in education, employment, and medical care. Among the submissions related to the workplace were the following: "Because of the job posting, which said 'recruitment for men and women only', I could not apply because I felt gender dysphoria"; "At a drinking party after work, my drunken boss angrily yelled at me, 'Are you gay? It's disgusting, try to be more manly'"; "While saying, 'FTM is not a woman, so it's okay', a colleague rubbed my breasts"; and "When I changed my gender, the company implored me not to tell other employees" (J-ALL, 2019a, n.p.). Reviewing these surveys, it can be concluded that LGBT people feel misunderstood in the workplace, and that they find it difficult to come out due to norms around gender roles and a perceived lack of support. While many non-LGBT people have at least heard the term "LGBT", it seems that most have not communicated with people who are LGBT (at least to their knowledge), do not feel confident to address LGBT issues, and may not even recognise LGBT-related harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Based on the above, "homophobia" (if that is the appropriate term to use here) in Japan seems to be driven less by moralistic prejudice (i.e., homosexuality is a sin, etc.), and more by a mindset that being LGBT+ marks a failure to conform to heteronormative and cisnormative societal expectations. As Tamagawa (2018) writes, "… although Japanese coworkers are relatively more familiar with GLBT issues than Japanese parents, Japanese GLBT workers' comings out are met with tacit refusals to welcome them as GLBT coworkers, due probably to their perception of their GLBT coworker as a violator of heteronormativity" (p. 514).[23] Framed in this way, it can be anticipated that giving this "violation" more legal and social space and agency would be actively discouraged, particularly by those who are privileged by the status quo.

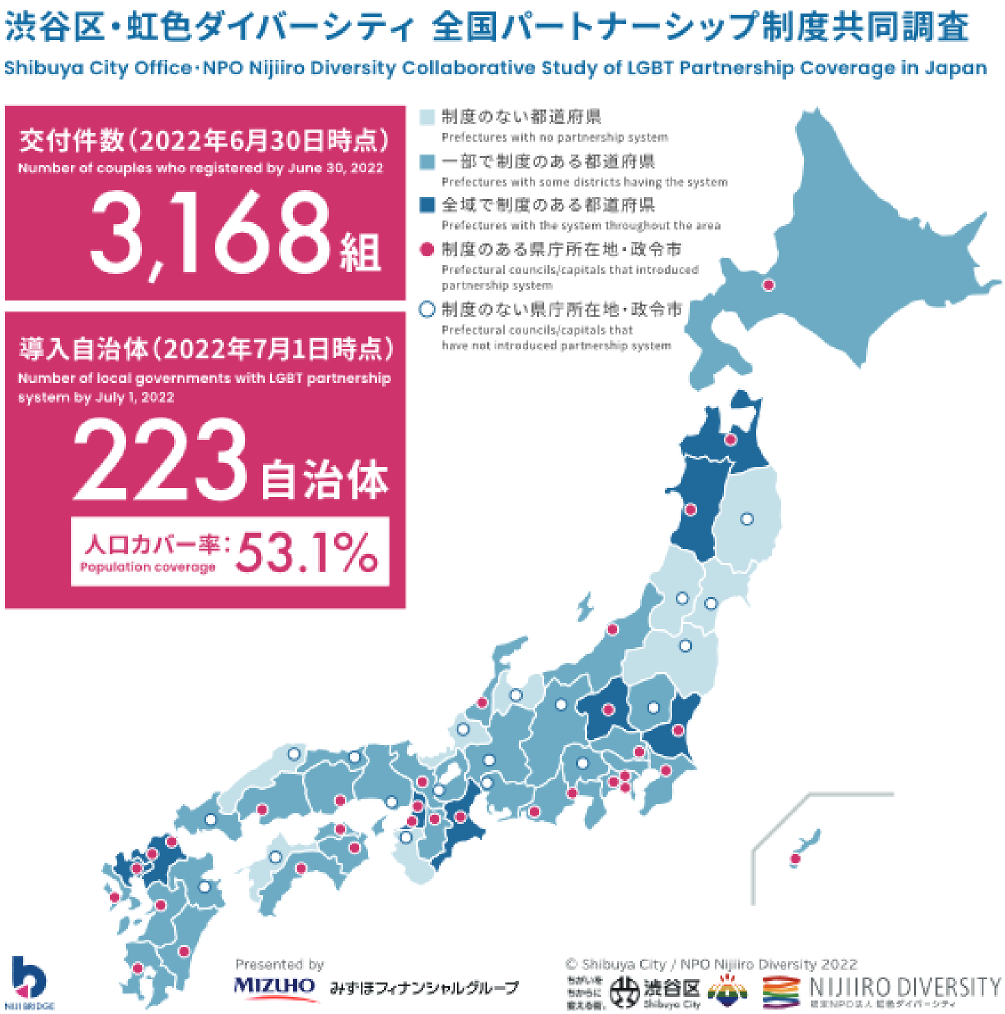
5.2.2 The legal landscape

Case in point, the scope of the law in Japan as it pertains to people who are LGBT is very limited; it is neither actively persecuting nor protecting. Cross-country reports have taken note of Japan's "progress".[24] For example, ILGA's *State-sponsored Homophobia* report (Mendos et al., 2020) and the Global Barometer of Gay Rights (Dicklitch-Nelson et al., 2019) mentioned in chapter 1 (section 1.1.1) group Japan with countries classified as "limited/uneven protection" and "intolerant", respectively.[25] Meanwhile, a report by the OECD (2020a) ranks Japan, South Korea and Turkey as the three lowest-performing OECD countries in terms of legal LGBTI inclusivity.[26] The report characterised the legal landscape for LGBTI people in Japan as follows: No explicit legal protection of LGBTI people against discrimination or violence; no explicit protection of LGBTI asylum seekers; no national equality body, ombudsman or human rights commission that explicitly protects LGBTI persons; no legal recognition of same-sex partnerships; sterilisation is explicitly required to legally change gender; and no significant step towards explicitly postponing medically unnecessary surgery on intersex minors (see also appendix A). As discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.3), in 1996, South Africa became the first country to constitutionally protect individuals against discrimination based on sexual orientation. Since then, a total of 11 UN Member States (6%) have similarly expanded constitutional protections, while 28 UN Member States (14%) have recognised same-sex marriage. In the case of Japan, neither sexual orientation nor gender identity are mentioned in the Japanese Constitution. Article 14, the anti-discrimination clause, stipulates that, "All people are equal under law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations due to race, creed, sex, social status or family origin", while Article 24, the marriage clause, stipulates that, "Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis". Here "wife" (*tsuma*) and "husband" (*otto*) are understood as gendered terms pertaining to a "woman" and a "man", respectively (Chi, 2016). Recognising that the constitution has not been amended since its inception, constitutional reform seems unlikely. Despite this, in the past 20 years, there have been several developments in providing legal recognition, resources, and support to LGBT+ people in Japan through other avenues. In contextualising these developments, the relationship between Japan and the Olympic Games must be considered.

In December 2014, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) amended the non-discrimination principle in the Olympic Charter to include sexual orientation as a protected category for future games (Human Rights First, 2014). The decision was made in the wake of the Winter Olympics in Sochi that year. In a time of significant advances in the scope and reporting of LGBT rights globally, the Russian government, which had passed laws in 2013 that banned the dissemination of "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations" around children and prohibited gay and lesbian couples in foreign countries from adopting Russian children, came under international scrutiny (Friedman, 2013; see also Suchland, 2018 for deeper analysis of the political homophobia in Russia). Carland-Echavarria (2022) notes how Japan, which had just been selected to host the Summer Olympics in 2020, was influenced by the IOC amendment. For example, the LDP created an internal Special Mission Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (hereafter LDP SOGI Committee) in 2015 (Nikaidō, 2017). In line with *The Fundamental Principles of Olympism*,[27] the Tokyo 2020 Games Foundation Plan explicitly mentions respect and acceptance of differences in sexual orientation as part of its 3 core concepts.[28] Subsequently, in Tokyo Metropolis, a *jōrei* ("ordinance") that prohibits residents (*tomin*) and local business (*jigyōsha*) from discriminating on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation was promulgated on the 15th of October 2018 (Research Institute for Local Government, 2022; see also Terahara, 2018). Ibaraki passed a similar ordinance in 2019. These are examples of broad, albeit limited, protections at the level of subnational jurisdiction, as defined by the ILGA report (Mendos et al., 2020). Limited protections also exist in employment in the form of amendments made to laws that relate to harassment prevention, namely the *josei katsuyō suishin hō* (Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace) and the *rōdō shisaku sōgō suishin hō* (Labour Measures Comprehensive Promotion Act), the details of which will be elaborated upon in chapter 6 (section 6.2.2). Finally, in terms of recognition, civil unions of same-sex couples are partially recognised by way of the *pātonāshippu* (*sensei*) *seido* ("partnership [pledge] system"). As of the 1st of July 2022, 223 *jichitai* ("local governments") have enacted a partnership system, with 3168 couples registered as of June 30th 2022 (Shibuya City: Nijiiro Diversity, 2022; see also figure 5.1). Most recently the aforementioned Tokyo ordinance was amended on the 22nd of June 2022 to include a Tokyo-wide partnership system, which is scheduled to effect on the 1st of November 2022 (Research Institute for Local Government, 2022). Several prefectural-level systems are currently in operation, including in Ibaraki, Osaka, Gunma, and Saga.

As already discussed, Shibuya City in Tokyo was the first municipality in Japan to introduce the system. In March 2015, the *Shibuya ku danjo byōdō oyobi tayōsei o sonchō suru shakai o suishin suru jōrei* (Shibuya City Ordinance for the Promotion of a Diverse and Gender Equal Society; hereafter Shibuya SSP Ordinance) was passed by the Shibuya Municipal Assembly. Section 2.8 of the ordinance stipulates that "partnership refers to a social life relationship between two persons who have the same gender on the family register that is, essentially, no different from a marriage relationship between a man and a woman" (Shibuya SSP Ordinance, 2015). Couples are able to apply for a *pātonāshippu shōmei* (partnership certificate) that, while not treated as *jijitsukon* (common law marriage) under Japanese law, may facilitate, for instance, visiting a hospitalised partner, renting an apartment, receiving an inheritance, becoming a beneficiary of life insurance, and getting a "family discount" for various services (Chi, 2016). In the case of Shibuya, in order to

Figure 5.1 Coverage of partnership system in Japan 2022



Source: Shibuya City: Nijiiro Diversity, 2022.

apply for a partnership certificate, both individuals, who have the same gender registered on their *koseki*, must meet all of the following criteria:

- Resides in Shibuya City and registered as a resident;
- Has attained 18 years of age;
- Has neither a spouse nor existing partnership;
- Not be a close relative of the other party (Shibuya City, 2022).

Further, there are several documents required, including a certificate of residence and a transcript of the *koseki*, as well as drafts of a *nin'i kōken keiyaku* (voluntary guardianship contract) and a *gōi keiyaku* ("contract of consent") to be notarised, amounting to approximately 80,000 yen in fees (see also Chi, 2016).[29] Yotsumoto and Senba (2017) recognise the cost hurdle as well as the fact that the certificate is only valid within the municipality it was issued in, as limiting factors to the appeal of the partnership system. Moreover, there are differences in costs, application procedures, and scope of recognition depending on the municipality. For example, compared with Shibuya, the application process in Setagaya City is relatively straight-forward, does not involve the drawing up of notarised documents, and is free. However, Shibuya City grants a partnership certificate, while Setagaya City grants a "partnership pledge". As explained by Chi (2016), an ordinance (in the case of Shibuya City) must be decided upon and passed by the majority vote at the city assembly whereas a *yōkō* ("guideline") (in the case of Setagaya City) is decided on and implemented by the authority of the *kuchō* (mayor) (see also Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). Finally, Shibuya City can hold businesses accountable to some extent. They can be "advised to take corrective action" (*zesei kankoku*) or be publicly named if found to have discriminated against those holding a partnership certificate. Recognising that the certificates are not legally binding, and that it is at the discretion of individual businesses to accept or refuse their validity, it is for the couples to assess the merits and demerits of applying and to determine whether or not it is worthwhile for them based on their circumstances.

Looking specifically at the legal situation for people who are trans in Japan, another ILGA report is illuminating. Again focusing on UN Member States, the *Trans Legal Mapping Report* (Chiam, 2020) outlines laws that criminalise, both directly and indirectly, trans individuals and communities, as well as laws and policies that pertain to legal gender recognition, distinguishing between "name change" and "sex/gender marker change" processes. In Japan, there are no laws overtly criminalising trans communities and gender confirmation surgeries were decriminalised in 1996, as explained in section 5.1.2. Regarding name change, as stipulated in the *koseki hō* (Family Register Act) , "a person who wishes to change their given name on justifiable grounds shall submit a notification to that effect, with the permission of the family court (Cap 4, § 15 art. 107-2). People who are trans can apply to change their name with either a gender identity disorder diagnosis (medical certificate required) or with proof that they have lived with and used the name they identify with for a certain period of time in their daily life (Chiam, 2020). Likewise, an individual must first be diagnosed as having a gender identity disorder (GID) to be eligible for surgeries, as well as to access hormones and other gender confirmation services. In this way, in order to satisfy Article 28 of the then eugenic protection law, which states that no one may perform eugenic surgery without reason, GID became the medical condition for which sex reassignment surgery is the required *iryō* ("medical treatment") (Ishida, 2002). Thus, in Japan the experience of being trans is pathologised. This is reflected in the latest version of the *Seidōitsusei* *shōgai ni kansuru shindan to chiryō no gaidorain* ("Guideline of the assessment and treatment of gender identity disorder") published by the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology (2018). This guideline has been largely incorporated into legal text, including the Special Act on GID, as well as the requirements for writing medical certificates. Specifically, Article 2 of the Special Act on GID, defines a person with gender identity disorder (*seidōitsusei shōgaisha*) as: "A person, despite his/her biological sex being clear, who continually maintains a psychological identity with another gender (hereinafter, 'alternative gender'), who holds the intention to physically and socially conform to an alternative gender, and who has been medically diagnosed in such respects by two or more physicians generally recognized as holding competent knowledge and experience necessary for the task". Meanwhile, Article 3 indicates that Family Courts are authorised to adjudicate a change in the handling of gender upon the application of a person with GID who fulfils the following requirements:

1. The person is 18 years or older;
2. The person is not presently married;
3. The person does not presently have a minor child;
4. The person does not have gonads or permanently lacks functioning gonads; and
5. The person's physical form is endowed with genitalia that closely resemble the physical form of an alternative gender.

As for the last two items, in practice, this means that the person has been sterilised, and that they have completed sex reassignment surgery (SRS). According to the *Nihon seidōitsusei shōgai/seibetsu iwa to tomo ni ikiru hitobito no kai* (Japan Association of People living with Gender Identity Disorder and Gender Dysphoria [gid.jp]) (2020a), from 2004 to 2020, there were 10,555 applications for change of the registered gender, and 10,301 applications were approved, representing an almost 98 per cent rate of approval.

The Special Act on GID has attracted praise as well as criticism (including from international bodies like the United Nations; see Human Rights Watch, 2019), and although some changes have been made since it was first enacted, the requirements remain prohibitive. In April 2022, the minimum age required to apply for gender marker change was reduced from 20 years old to 18 years old, reflecting the revisions made to Civil Code to lower the age of majority in Japan. Concerning item 2, because legally transitioning in Japan is constrained by the sex/gender binary, it follows that once the gender marker on the *koseki* is changed, a married couple will be recategorised as "same-sex", which is in violation of family law. Thus, a married trans person must first file for divorce. As a result of growing criticism, in June 2008, the Act was amended such that item 3 of the requirements for gender marker change was altered from “the person has no children” to “the person does not presently have a minor child” (Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). Taniguchi (2016) argues that this item is based on an assumption, lacking any evidence or statistical data, that having trans parents is inherently harmful to the welfare of children. Confirming this, Human Rights Watch (2019) reports that, in an exchange between the United Nations special rapporteur and the Ministry of Health in Japan, the government responded that the “no child” stipulation was in place in order to avoid confusion within the family, including between parent and child, or influence the child’s welfare. The gid.jp (2020b), conducted a survey of trans people with children (n = 45). The majority were male to female (MtF) trans (78%), lived in Tokyo (20%), and were in their 40s (51%), with children aged 10-15 (44%). Regarding “treatment status”, 58 per cent of respondents indicated that they had hormone therapy and surgeries other than SRS, while 27 per cent had completed SRS. The primary reasons given by the respondents as to why they did not pursue SRS were: Even if I have the operation I won’t be able to change my gender marker because I have a child; I cannot take a long time off work because I have a family; and the surgery costs are high. Further, 49 per cent of respondents indicated that they were divorced, 53 per cent indicated that they lived with their children, and the majority (36%) felt that their children understood and supported them. Finally, regarding the question, “Disadvantages to the child caused by the respondent's inability to change gender”, which allowed for free input, many of the respondents talked about how they were worried that their child would be bullied at school because of the mismatch between their own gender presentation and legal gender, and also felt unable to participate properly in their child’s education, including attending school events.

Meanwhile, in January 2019, the Supreme Court ruled that the Special Act on GID was not unconstitutional, upholding the requirement that trans people be sterilised in order to change gender marker (Siripala, 2019). Doi & Knight (2019) write that forced sterilisation has been condemned by health and human rights bodies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), and that the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), published by the American Psychiatric Association, and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), published by the WHO, no longer recognise the diagnosis of “Gender identity disorder” (see also Gander, 2018). Also notable is the fact that, while the court did not invalidate the law, it did offer significant critique; the four-judge bench conceded that the law impinges on freedom from invasion of bodily privacy. Overall, the laws described in this section provide same-sex couples and trans people some form of legal recognition and process, while at the same time do little to problematise the gender binary or be truly inclusive of SOGI diversity. Hearing from trans people and their allies, clearly, people who are trans already have partners and children and are doing what they can to be there for their families while also navigating their own transition journeys. Rather than consider the welfare of the people involved, in its current form, the Special Act on GID strips away the dignity of diverse families, and compromises their health and well-being—*Takasugiru hādoru* ("the hurdle is too high") (Human Rights Watch, 2019). In response what they saw as a failure on the part of the government to meet the requirements of the Olympic Charter, the Olympic Agenda 2020, and human rights standards, in 2020, the Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation, Athlete Ally, All Out, and Human Rights Watch launched the #EqualityActJapan campaign (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The campaign received 106,250 signatures from Japan and abroad, with endorsements from more than 20 organisations, including Coca-Cola, Microsoft, and PwC . Subsequently, a petition was submitted to the government in March 2021, calling for the introduction and enactment of legislation to protect LGBT people from discrimination ahead of the Olympics. To be discussed in section 5.2.3., while a bill of such nature has been submitted to parliament, its potential passage remains pending. Results from the survey conducted by Kamano and colleagues (2020) mentioned in section 5.2.1 indicate that 87.7 per cent of respondents "agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that laws and ordinances should be established that explicitly prohibit bullying and discrimination against sexual minorities, with majority support (80% or more) across all age groups. Evidently, viewing the situation for LGBT+ people through the lens of the law only provides an incomplete picture, a point emphasised in the ILGA report (Mendos et al., 2020): "How hostile or safe a country is cannot be derived exclusively from what said country's legal framework looks like. In other words, how the law of any given country reads on the books cannot be used as a proxy to measure how safe a country is. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that laws on the books—whether enforced or not—have a tremendous impact on our communities, and speak volumes about the political and moral values of those holding power in a country" (p. 9). With that said, it is now time to consider how LGBT+ issues in Japan are framed by the government.

5.2.3 State-sponsored "tolerance"

Applying a critical lens to how knowledge of queer subjectivities in Japan is generated and deployed, three interlocking issues become apparent: an overemphasis on male homosexuality in a field dominated by male scholars at the exclusion of exploration of women's sexuality by women; a tendency in English language scholarship to glorify and romanticise *nanshoku* relationships and Japan's "utopian" queer past; and the (re)production of the "Japan as a tolerant state" narrative. To the first issues, more research has been done on the history of male same-sex relations than on female same-sex relations in Japan (Vincent & Kazuma, 1997). Although there has been some important work done by women in the field in recent years (e.g., Iino, 2008; Akaeda, 2011; Horie, 2015), the focus has been squarely on modern history. Similarly, scholars have argued that the overemphasis of the tolerance of same-sex sexuality among men in Japan obscures the issues of lesbian invisibility and gender inequality in Japan (e.g., Khor, 2010). As Lunsing (2001/2016) writes: "Given the prevalence of homophobia in the U.S., it should come as no surprise that American gay and lesbian scholars may overemphasise positive features of homosexuality elsewhere in order to provide a mirror to criticise their own culture" (p.323). For example, in the opening paragraphs of *Male colours: The construction of homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan*, Leupp (1995) states that "[s]ex between males was not only widely tolerated among the articulate classes but positively celebrated in popular art and literature … the generous vocabulary of terms relating to male-male sex in early modern Japanese reflects a society at ease with the phenomenon" (p. 1). Meanwhile, in the foreword to *Queer voices from Japan* (Eds. McLelland, Suganuma, & Welker, 2007), Donald Richie[30] opines: "In general, *same-sex love* was socially approved (or ignored) to a degree regarded as unthinkable after 1868, the Meiji Period, when Japan elected to imitate the West" (p. x; emphasis added). Japanese language texts also uncritically equate pre-modern Japan with tolerance. For example, in *Daibāshiti to māketingu* (2017), Yotsumoto and Senba use the following subheading in a chapter about the "sexual minority" discrimination in Japan: *Korai, hito wa dōseiai ni kanyō datta* ("From ancient times, people tolerated homosexuality") (p. 50). Here again, context is key. As explored above, while it can be said that in some contexts, such as in the arts, certain prescribed (male) homosexual practices and gender queer performances were appreciated and even celebrated, it is deleterious to say that queer people in premodern Japan did not face both social and legal scrutiny. Khor (2010) frames this emphasis of tolerance as an "aversion of Orientalism [where] Japan seems to be constructed as the (male) (homo) sexual paradise, a land free from legal constraints and religious condemnation, all of which could be attributed to the very 'culture' of Japan" (p. 53).

This rhetoric of *kanyō* (tolerance) has been co-opted by the Japanese state to deny the discrimination against queer people in contemporary society. The *Jiyū minshu tō* (Liberal Democratic Party [LDP]), which has held a majority government almost continuously since its foundation in 1955, is decidedly reluctant to progress the rights of LGBT+ people. Indeed, a survey of 545 political candidates from nine parties conducted by The Asahi Shinbun, in collaboration with a team at the University of Tokyo helmed by political scientist Taniguchi Masaki, found that the LDP was least likely to support same-sex marriage, the bill promoting the understanding of sexual minorities, and the dual-surname system (Ogi, 2022). Following the launch of Shibuya's "partnership certificate system" for same-sex couples in 2015, in an interview for Sankei Shinbun, Hasegawa Michiko, professor emeritus of Saitama University and advisor to former prime minister Abe Shinzō, vocally opposed same-sex marriage. Hasegawa argued that, unlike in Christian civilisation, there has been "little discomfort (*iwakan wa usui*)" about homosexuality in Japanese culture (Imanaka, 2015). The previously cited Marriage for All Japan survey revealed that 41.5 per cent of respondents who were politically affiliated with the LDP opposed same-sex marriage, the highest percentage across the political parties mentioned. In 2016, the LDP SOGI Committee released a Q&A-style pamphlet as part of wider efforts to promote the understanding of SOGI diversity in Japan. Question eleven relates to how SOGI diversity was treated historically. The answer goes on to detail the spread of *nanshoku*, and cites prominent historical figures Zen Buddhist monk and poet Ikkyū Sōjun and *daimyō* ("regional lord") Date Masamune as proponents and practitioners. It then states (with emphasis) that, compared with the "religiously strict west",[31] Japan was historically "relatively tolerant" towards (male) homosexuality (LDP SOGI Committee, 2016, p. 14).[32] In another publication, the LDP acknowledges the long history of cross dressing with kabuki *onnagata* and aligns this with being tolerant of SOGI diversity (Policy Affairs Research Council in LDP, 2016). Notably, none of these accounts of Japan's queer history reference women's sexuality. In a critique of these publications, Kazama (2020) concludes that the inclusion espoused is conditional, with LGBT people relegated to the private sphere, and the acceptance of a "tolerant traditional culture" predicated on heterosexism and gender norms. Here, a practice of remembering and forgetting is (re)iterated: a remembering is produced by locating queer people of Japan in an idealised past; simultaneously, a forgetting is produced through the denial or dismissal of the injustices queer people face in modern Japan.

LDP members have become increasingly vocal in their opinions of people who are LGBT+: "It's not that I don't approve of diversity and it's fine if women like women and men like men. But it's not necessary to legalize same-sex marriage. It's like a hobby." (expressed by Tanigawa Tom on an Internet television program) (Johnston, 2018); "[same-sex couples] don't produce children. In other words, they lack productivity and, therefore, do not contribute to the prosperity of the nation." (expressed in a magazine article by Sugita Mio) (McCurry, 2018); and "It would be strange to criticise [same-sex marriage]. Of course it's fine. However, if everyone were to become these people, the nation would collapse." (expressed by Hirasawa Katsuei on a news site) (Nasu, 2019). Maree (2020) and others (e.g., Carland-Echavarria, 2022), trace the backlash against the advancement of LGBT rights in Japan to the early 2000s with the passage of the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society (1999).[33] The act outlines the measures deemed necessary to achieve the formation of a "society in which both men and women, as equal members, have the opportunity to participate in all kinds of social activities at will, equally enjoy political, economic and cultural benefits, and share responsibilities" (Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office, n.d.). Following the country-wide establishment of offices tasked with promoting feminist and LGBT-inclusive policy, charters were drafted that called for gender identity and sexual orientation to be respected as fundamental human rights (Horie, 2015). However, against a backdrop of economic stagnation and demographic decline—Japan's so-called "Lost decade" (see, for example, Yoda, 2006)—the ideology of a *jendā furī* (gender-free)[34] society was not received well by some conservative pundits. What followed was a slew of attacks, first appearing in the newsletters and pamphlets of organizations, including the right-wing *Nippon Kaigi* (Japan Conference), and then in conservative mass media and on the Internet (Yamaguchi, 2014). Critics appropriated and weaponised gender-free rhetoric. Queer studies scholar Akiko Shimuzu writes that backlashers specifically targeted issues of sexual and gender minorities because they saw these issues as the most controversial and scandalous to the general public: "They claimed that feminists and the advocates for what they called 'gender-free movements' were denying sexual difference, creating a new generation of 'gender confused' and/or bisexual children, and destroying traditional Japanese families and communities" (2020, p. 92). In March 2005, the LDP announced the formation of a project team for "Investigating the status of radical sex education and gender free education", which was jointly led by lower house member Yamatani Eriko and future prime minister Abe Shinzo (Saitō, 2018). The team initiated a public awareness campaign to warn the public about gender-inclusive initiatives. Gender-inclusive education reform efforts suffered as lobbyists successfully campaigned for the removal of certain books from public libraries (Maree, 2020). In his book *Utsukushii kuni e* (Toward a beautiful country), Abe criticises positive depictions of "nontraditional families" found in textbooks, including same-sex couples and single parents, and calls for educators to "propagate a model of family that is proper for children" (2006, p. 316). Sugita's essay published in the August 2018 issue of *Shinchō 45* (published July 18), titled "The level of 'LGBT' support is excessive", taps into many of the same arguments made by Abe. Thus, generation of knowledge that pathologises and demonises LGBT people continues to be propagated, and a cohesive stance on LGBT rights in Japan remains elusive.

Most recently, in June 2022, there was a conference held by LDP lawmakers affiliated with the *shintō seiji renmei* (Shinto Association of Spiritual Leadership) (Matsuoka, 2022).[35] During the conference, a booklet titled "LGBT partnership, same-sex marriage, separate family names for husband and wife: Various problems related to family and society" was distributed. Inside, many unscientific and illogical assertions were made, including that "homosexuality is an addiction", that "sexual minority lifestyles should not be justified because they lead to the collapse of family and society", and that "it's their own fault that LGBT+ people are killing themselves". This anti-LGBT sentiment has been met with public acts of resistance. On the 27th of July 2018, more than 5,000 people gathered in front of LDP headquarters in Nagatachō, Tokyo in protest of Sugita's assertions regarding the "unproductiveness" of LGBT people (Udagawa, 2018). Protestors called for Sugita's resignation, and a group of openly LGBT politicians, the *LGBT jichitai giin renmei* (Municipal LGBT Legislators Alliance), delivered a proclamation to the LDP, stating that Sugita's article "encourages prejudice towards LGBT people and rejects those without children, those who cannot produce children, and people in precarious economic situations as the result of disability and illness" ("Sabetsu o suru na", 2018). Further protests took place in cities including Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka the following month. A point Mizuki raised during the interview was that, in her experience, trying to bring up queer issues within feminism was difficult because queer issues were seen as "taking away from" women's issues. This was something that Crenshaw (1991) noted in her discussion about political intersectionality: "The problem with identity politics is not that it fails to transcend difference [but rather] that it frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences … Feminist efforts to politicize experiences of women and antiracist efforts to politicize experiences of people of color have frequently proceeded as though the issues and experiences they each detail occur on mutually exclusive terrains" (p. 1242). In the case of the 2018 protests however, it seems that a degree of intersectional politics was successfully executed. Carland-Echavarria (2022) notes how, by linking LGBT marginalisation to the struggles of other social groups deemed "unproductive", including single women, the elderly, and people living with disabilities, coalitions were formed through the politics of *seisansei* (productivity). In contrast to these protests, depoliticised, non-confrontational forms of activism also characterise the LGBT+ movement in Japan. Regarding the protest against the distribution of the *shintō seiji renmei* booklet, a citizens group organised by Matsuoka Soshi launched a *Change.org* petition on July 2nd 2022, calling on the LDP to "deny what is written in the booklet and demonstrate a stance to eliminate discrimination", as well as to "retrieve the booklets to prevent discriminatory views based on wrong perceptions from spreading any further" (Fujisawa, 2022). A total of 51,503 signatures were collected and sent to the LDP party on the 25th of July.

Ultimately, ideological differences within the LDP over LGBT rights have led to a lack of legislative reform, with the focus instead on seeking to promote *tadashii rikai* ("correct understanding") about queer people in the form of a *LGBT rikai zōshin hōan* ("LGBT Comprehension-Raising Bill") (Nikaidō, 2017). In contrast, on the 27th of March 2016, four opposition parties[36] jointly submitted a comprehensive anti-LGBT discrimination bill to the Diet ("LGBT sabetsu kaishō e*",* 2022), and in December 2018, the Bill on Promotion of Elimination of Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity was introduced in the House of Representatives (Mendos et al., 2020). The LDP refused to submit the bill during the 204th session of the diet in 2021 (Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, 2021), and as of the 208th session of the diet in June 2022, the bill is still under examination (*keizoku shinsa*; House of Councillors, 2022). In what Shimizu (2017) refers to as a "two-pronged approach", the Japanese government promotes itself as open to diversity on the international level, while simultaneously refusing to instigate any legal protections for LGBT+ people on the national level. In allowing private companies and local governments to make their own non-legally binding policies, the Japanese government essentially hides its own complicity in the rights violations of LGBT+ individuals in Japan. As such, Japan has not legalised same-sex marriage or provided any federal-level protections, including from hate crimes, on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation. However, as this research can attest, LGBT+ people in Japan are not only subjected to physical and psychic violence, but also to structural violence. The *shinkiba jiken* (Shinkiba incident) exemplifies these different forms of violence. In 2000, a 33-year-old gay man was killed in Yumenoshima Ryokudō Park by three youths (Kawaguchi & Kazama, 2010). The assailants, who were 14, 15, and 25 years of age, hit the man with logs and trampled him until he died, and then took the cash on his person. It is understood that they wanted money for pleasure, and that they saw the men who frequented the park as easy targets, believing that "*homo*" would not report the incident to the police. They were part of a larger group who regularly harassed park goers. Although motivated more by money than by hate (Shimizu, 2007), the youths were systematic in their targeting of (assumed) gay men. Analysing the media coverage at the time, Kawaguchi and Kazama (2010) note that while some popular magazines stated that a lack of reporting invited *homo gari* ("homo hunting"), homophobia was not mentioned as a motive of the murder, presumably so as to not cause more trouble for the bereaved family. With the man's sexuality deemphasised, and the crime thus uncoupled from LGBT+ rights, opportunities to incite systemic change were lost. The actions of the assailants and the response of the media reveal common sense assumptions of shame around (queer) sexuality in Japanese society, which can be silencing as well as exploited. Violence, both interpersonal and structural, shapes the lives of LGBT+ people in Japan. This will be further unpacked in the next section.

5.3 Social institutions

As discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.1.2), power relations are communicated through language, discursive practices, and physical appearance. This section examines how prevailing discourse(s), sometimes competing or contradictory, reinforce the dominant ideologies of heteronormativity and *tan'itsu minzoku shakai* within six social institutions—family, education, health, state, economy, and media. Laws pertinent to each of the institutions will be discussed. As will be shown, some laws complement these dominant ideologies while in other cases, despite the enactment of laws intended to address inequalities, exclusionary practices persist. To an extent, this section may contribute to the "Japaneseness" discourse, as (re)produced in *nihonjinron*, by presenting ideas about how Japanese people behave in a matter-of-fact, naturalising manner. Thus, it should be acknowledged that the descriptions of these social institutions serve as generalisations and do not characterise individual experience. Indeed, in the current inquiry, some of the participants' experiences ran contrary to expectations. Viewing these institutions through the lens of LGBT+ experiences in Japan, instances of consent as well as resistance to hegemony are revealed.

5.3.1 Family

As Midori pointed out during her interview, "the smallest unit of [Japanese] society is the family". In 1947, the *ie seido* was replaced by the *koseki seido*, which arguably maintains Japan's traditional patriarchal family system (Kubo, 2020; see also section 5.1.1). Unlike a birth certificate, which is used as a form of individual identification and is static, the *koseki* is dynamic and situates the individual within a family and within familial relationships (Chapman & Krogness, 2014). As Mackie (2014) articulates, the Japanese state defines the family in terms of a "heterosexual couple of Japanese nationality who produce children by biological reproduction … genetically related to two parents" (p. 203). Importantly, the couple is also married; while common law marriage is a legally defined consensual union, it is uncommon in Japan (see Fukuda, 2020). An array of rights and benefits are accessible only through marriage. As described in chapter 2 (section 2.2.4), children born outside of wedlock are legally defined as illegitimate. As a result, a great majority of Japanese couples choose to marry when they are expecting their first child (Sunagawa, 2009), in effect being forced to register with the *koseki seido* in order to be legally recognised as a parent-child family unit. Upon marriage, a new *koseki* is created and the details are then transferred to a new registry (Chapman, 2012). In each *koseki* one person takes the position of *hittōsha* (head of household), and all members of the same *koseki* have the same surname. In the post-1947 system the head of household need not be male, and the surname taken need not be the husband/father's, although in most cases it continues to be the husbands/father's that is used (Mackie, 2014).[37] Attempts to change the law have thus far been unsuccessful (Yan & Wakatsuki, 2015; Ara, 2021).[38] Edwards (1989) notes that people are seen as fully achieving the status of *shakaijin* (lit. society person) only after forming their own *katei* ("family") through (heterosexual) marriage. The pervasive importance attached to marriage extends to queer people (Lunsing, 2016/2016). For example, in Dasgupta's (2017) research, one of his informants viewed being gay and being a *shakaijin* as incompatible. The informant, who was in his late 20s at the time, had made a deliberate choice to get married to a woman and start a family while also maintaining a gay identity. In the current inquiry too, many of the participants felt the coercive force of marriage. The naturalness of heterosexual marriage makes it one of the most oppressive forces in Japanese society today; what sociologist Johan Galtung (1969) refers to as *structural violence*.

In many families, talking about sexuality (and gender) remains *tabū* (taboo). Tamagawa (2018) distinguishes between two types of homophobia in Japan: *otonashii* (quiet) and *uchi* (familial). Quiet homophobia refers to an indirect, often unexpressed homophobia that pervades society at large. Meanwhile, Tamagawa asserts that since Japanese people feel most comfortable expressing their inner feelings in their home, the Japanese home becomes the locus of direct homophobia. Haru's father died when he was ten, and his mother did not remarry. Feeling suffocated and isolated as a gay person in Japanese society, he decided to participate in a study abroad program in England during his undergraduate degree. There, he was able to open up to teachers and friends about his sexuality. After he returned to Japan, Haru decided to come out to his mother; he was in his early 20s at the time. Her initial reaction was a negative one; she said she wished he could be cured. Over time, she gained understanding, reflecting on her own hardships as a single mother in Japanese society. At first, she would refer to Haru's boyfriend as his "friend", but eventually came to accept Haru's relationship. During the interview, Midori also touched on her relationship with her mother:

> So my family was really unique in the way that they truly believed in diversity and inclusion. So even when I was small, friends from a certain area, you know, they're discriminated [against]. And they used to come to my house all the time. And much later, my mother said, "Did you know they weren't allowed to go to other houses?" And [I was like], "Wow, why?" "Because

> they live in certain districts and parents didn't appreciate their child to have fun with them." "Okay." So, to me, discrimination and hatred were taught.[39]

Talking about her community work with families of LGBT+ children, and especially with mothers, Midori recognised the role that families play in forming the values and attitudes of their children.

The Reach Online 2016 survey of 15,064 LGBT people from in Japan revealed that, of those respondents who had come out to their parents, 23.5 percent of respondents were in their teenage years, 23.9 per cent were in their 20s, and 24.4 per cent were in their 30s; the average across all age groups was 22 per cent (Hidaka, 2017). It was also found that the proportion of respondents who were out varied by region, with people living in urban areas more likely to be out than people living in regional areas; Tokyo Metropolis had the highest proportion (24.7%), and Fukuoka Prefecture had the lowest (16.2%). Finally, it was found that 27.6 per cent of the respondents had come out at school or at work, and that, as with family, the rate of coming out varied by region. Hidaka concluded that coming out to family represented a higher hurdle than coming out at school or at work. In Study 1 of the current inquiry the participants from the Japanese LGBT+ cohort and the LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort exhibited various levels of disclosure in their home environment. Some were out to one or both parents, some were out only to their siblings or otherwise only to their extended family, and some were not out at all (see also chapter 8, section 8.1). As with the disclosure strategy, the response to the disclosure itself was also varied; although some LGBT+ participants such as Haru were met with sadness or disbelief, others were met with acceptance and understanding. For example, in what he described as a "very natural conversation", Hide came out to his mother when he was 16 after experiencing his first heartbreak: "'I was dumped [by] someone.' And she said, 'Was that [a] he or [a] she?'". His father, who was quiet and a bit confused at first, eventually came around. In his mid-40s at the time of the interview, Hide believed that, compared with previous generations, younger parents in Japan were more willing to accept their LGBT children, and hoped that they could come out and "have a safe place in their family".

For those who resist heterosexual marriage and the "traditional" family model, there are some alternative routes to take. Without marriage equality, or any other system granting similar rights to same-sex couples, some queer couples in Japan have turned to adoption as a means to form legal relationships. Moriguchi (2010) notes that while the adoption of children is uncommon in Japan, with analysis of trends showing that it has actually been in decline despite the introduction of a comprehensive child adoption law in 1988, adult adoption has been commonplace "since medieval times" as an heirship strategy (see, for example, Kurosu, 1997). Japanese adoption laws are such that any adult person who has reached the age of majority may adopt, and there only need be a minimal age-difference (of at least one day) between the individual adopting and the adoptee (Mackie, 2014). The *kyodo seikatsu sengen* ("joint living agreement") protects the same-sex partner with regards to such matters as inheritance and medical decisions, without implicating the *koseki* system (Maree, 2004). Kazuki explained that he and his partner entered into a contract which gave them power of attorney—legal authority to make decisions on the others behalf with regards to medical care, for instance—as well as inheritance rights. As described in section 5.2.2, same-sex couples can also draw up notarised documents to enter municipal-level partnership systems, which are becoming increasingly widespread. In Japan, neither joint adoption, where a couple applies for adoption of a child, nor second parent adoption, where a person adopts their partner's biological children, are available to unmarried couples (ILGA Europe, 2015; Mendos et al., 2020). Arita's (2006) ethnographic study of Remaza Kansai, a lesbian mother group based in the Kansai region of western Japan, maps their struggles as they interface with the law and with educational institutions that do not affirm their existence as a family. The most visible of these so-called "rainbow families" is the unit of Honoyo, her partner Sugiyama Fumino, their sperm donor Matsunaka Gon, and their children Aru and Kino. In 2022, NHK World Prime released a 50 minute documentary that detailed their lives over a three year period. In particular, Honoyo spoke of the challenges of being labelled as a "three parent family" without necessarily feeling like one, while Matsunaka and Sugiyama, who were close friends and fellow activists tried to find a balance between their work and their roles as parents (NHK, 2022). Meanwhile, in Osaka City (2016) and in Aichi Prefecture (2020), two gay couples were officially recognised as *yōiku satooya* ("foster parents") in their respective municipalities (Yasuda, 2020; Teshima et al., 2021).[40] As Remaza Kansai states: "[W]e desperately need to give our children the opportunity to meet other children coming from a similar environment" (Arita, 2006, p. 106). LGBT+ families continue to tell their stories, carving out spaces of liveability in an unliveable system.

5.3.2 Education

After the home and family environment, school can be understood as the next space in which ideas about difference are shaped. In Japan, education is characterised by social division across several axes of difference. Perhaps the most glaring, historically, people living with disabilities have been separated from their non-disabled peers in a system of *bunri kyōiku* ("segregated education"). Maeda et al. (2021) note that, despite an espoused plan for *inkurūshibu kyōkiu* ("inclusive education"), the actual implementation of this approach is "less than ideal". Recently, the U.N. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities called for the complete abolition of segregated education in Japan (Beuchat, 2022). The panel also cited the 2016 mass murder of 19 people with mental challenges at Tsukui Yamayuri En care home facility in Sagamihara, Kanagawa Prefecture (see generally Inose, 2020), as evidence of "eugenic and ableist attitudes" in Japanese society. A study by Sato and colleagues (2019), who conducted three surveys of Japanese participants to assess their attitudes and perceptions toward an inclusive education system, found that, although there was general approval of inclusive education across all samples, likewise all samples underestimated the feasibility of the approach. Similarly, in a separate study of 270 in-service schoolteachers, the participants rated the feasibility of segregated education higher than inclusive education, despite believing inclusive education to be just as desirable (Maeda et al., 2021). In particular, the study findings suggest that the promotion of inclusive education could be bolstered by an organisational climate in which teachers feel comfortable asking for help from colleagues.

Second, students who are *hāfu* (mixed-heritage) or *kikokushijo* (returnees) can have trouble (re)integrating into the Japanese education system. Being different, especially visibly, makes a person an easy target of *ijime* ("bullying"). Shogo spoke about how he was made fun of in school because of his height, and Kasumi because of her facial features; different from "typical Japanese" phenotypic expression. As the expression goes: *deru kui wa utareru* ("the nail that sticks out gets hammered down"). Mizuki's father was a teacher, and was sent with his family on a three-year assignment in the U.S.; Mizuki was six at the time. Returning to Japan after three years, Mizuki spoke about her experience of reverse culture shock and the struggle of fitting back in to Japanese society:

> But, yeah, for me I think, my experience in the States is, a huge part of my building of my personality. And after I came back to Japan, I was kinda like a weirdo for a while because I'm very bold, like compared to other people in Japan, as a female as well.

Returning to Japan at the age of 14, Airi expressed a similar sentiment, finding it difficult to conform to what it means to be a woman in Japan. In a review of the literature, Isogai et al. (1999) conclude that the three most cited re-entry issues for *kikokushijo* are interpersonal: 1. patterns of self-assertion (*jibun no dashikata*); 2. relationships between the individual and the group (*kojin to* *shuudan no kankei*); and 3. relationships between “older” and “younger” individuals (*sempai kohai*) (see, for example, White, 1988; Minoura, 1988; Kidder, 1992). Women in particular experienced a new found resistance to male dominated social practices. In a more recent qualitative study of 40 *kikokushijo* (average age of 10), Ono (2018) reported that 75 per cent of participants experienced repatriation challenges to varying degrees, and that country of expatriation influenced their experiences. Specifically, those returning from western countries such as the U.S. experienced positive prejudice, treated as outsiders and yet admired for their (English) language abilities. Meanwhile, those who returned from Asian countries faced discrimination from both their peers and their teachers. As a person of mixed heritage, Hide noticed generational change. Having experienced rejection for not being “pure” Japanese during his youth, as an older person when he divulged his background to younger people he was met with responses such as: “Oh, I wish I were like you.”; “You’re so cool.”; or, “Tell me more.” The increasing number of international families living in Japan work to blur the line between “Japanese” and “foreign”.

Third, schools in Japan stifle gender expression, (re)enforcing the gender binary through strict dress codes, including hair length, roll call, seating arrangements, and separating students into “male” and “female” groups for school activities, as well as segregated toilets and changing areas (see generally Yakushi et al., 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2016). This creates an unwelcoming environment for queer people, particularly trans and gender nonconforming people; students and educators alike. In a survey of 1167 people who had been diagnosed with GID, 70 per cent indicated that they had had feelings of *seibetsu iwa* (“gender dysphoria”) by the time they entered elementary school; over 90 per cent by time they entered middle school (Nakatsuka, 2015). Ken explained that in his case, his parents recognised that he was a “strange girl” by the age of three; Ken didn’t like pink or playing with “girl’s” toys. He started to feel dysphoria in his body when puberty hit around the age of 13. In high school he was wearing a skirt and sporting a *bōzu* (“buzz cut”) hairstyle. Similarly, in a study of 1025 gay and bisexual youth, it is indicted that the participants had, on average, a “vague awareness that they were gay” at around 13 years of age and “thought that they were probably not heterosexual” by 15 (Hidaka et al., 2007). At a time when people’s bodies are going through significant changes, both hormonally and physically, navigating this change as an LGBT+ person, especially without guidance or support, could be incredibly confusing and scary.

A 2005 survey of 5731 gay and bisexual youths asked respondents about what kind of information they had received about “homosexuality”: 78.5 per cent of respondents had learned nothing at all; 4.3 percent had received negative information about homosexuality; and 3.9 per cent had learned that homosexuality was "*ijō* (abnormal)" (Hidaka et al., 2007). The subsequent Reach Online 2016 survey (Hidaka, 2017) produced similar results: "learned nothing at all" 68 per cent; "negative information" 17.2 per cent; "homosexuality abnormal" 5.4 per cent. Meanwhile, in a survey of 5979 teachers (from preschool through to high school), 77.5 per cent of respondents reported that they had not introduced content about LGBT in their class (Hidaka, 2015). When asked why, 42.5 per cent indicated that hadn't felt the necessity to include it, 26.1 per cent said they didn't know much about "homosexuality" or "gender identity disorder (GID)", and 19.1 per cent said that "there were no textbooks written [about LGBT]". Ultimately, 62.8 per cent and 73 per cent of teachers thought it was important to teach students about "homosexuality" and about "GID", respectively. In 2017, after a review of the national curriculum, the government announced that it would not include information about LGBT people (Doi & Knight, 2017). As it stands, the curriculum advises instructors to teach that "when in puberty … people develop an interest in the opposite sex". Although it has been reported that textbooks have started to include content on sexuality and gender identity (Glauert, 2019), a lack of access to LGBT-related information persists. In a survey of 673 middle school students and 218 high school students, Kasai (2021) found that 19.7 and 25.2 per cent of middle school and high school students, respectively, knew the word "LGBT"; much lower than the 91 per cent reported in the Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. (2019) survey (see section 5.2.1). The same survey revealed that 56.6 per cent of middle school students and 38.1 per cent of high school students understood the difference between "homosexuality" and "gender dysphoria (GID)" (Kasai, 2021). As discussed in section 5.2.3, education that seeks to promote SOGI diversity has faced considerable backlash.

The pressure to fit in, or rather, not to stand out, can manifest along multiple axes of difference. From a young age, Haru internalised that coming from a single mother family, as well as not being heterosexual, set him apart from the people around him:

> I noticed I was gay when I was in elementary school … I felt I have to be like a straight boy and my family is quite different from other families because my mother was a single mother … I felt I could never be the same as other people. I hated being the same, but I also felt that I wanted to be the same as other people … And so it was really hard for me to be different from other people because of my wish to be the same and I felt that as long as I was here, I lived here [in Japan], I couldn't be different.

Internalising heterosexist and cissexist[41] ideas may lead LGBT+ students to believe that there is something wrong with them. Bullying, school non-attendance, and suicide ideation have been measured in the LGBT+ student population in Japan. A 2013 survey (n = 609) of LGBT School Life (Inochi Respect, 2014) and the Reach Online 2016 survey (Hidaka, 2017) found that 68 per cent and 58.2 per cent, respectively, of respondents had experienced bullying or violence related to their LGBT identity. Teachers can also participate in bullying behaviours, or otherwise be complicit. In a survey of 458 students conducted by Human Rights Watch, 29 per cent of respondents indicated that they had heard insults, negative comments, or jokes about LGBT people from teachers; 86 per cent from teachers and students. Meanwhile, in the Reach Online 2016 survey (Hidaka, 2017), only 13.6 per cent of the sample (n = 8764) thought that their teachers were helpful in resolving the bullying issue. Regarding negative health and wellbeing outcomes, compiling the results of six studies, Nakatsuka (2016) reported that 29.4 per cent of young people diagnosed with GID experienced school non-attendance, 58.6 per cent experienced suicide ideation, and 28.4 per cent attempted suicide. In the 2013 LGBT School Life (Inochi Respect, 2014) survey, 12 per cent of respondents reported school non-attendance, 32 per cent reported suicide ideation, and 22 per cent reported self-harm behaviours. In 2015, a student at Hitotsubashi University law school committed suicide by jumping from a building on campus after being outed to his peers by another student (Toguchi, 2019; Teshima et al., 2021). In general, schools, as with wider legal and social structures, have failed to protect LGBT+ youth.

Some of the participants also found acceptance at school. Kazuki realised he was gay at 13 years of age. Perceived as a “replacement girl” by his peers, he had long hair throughout his school years and was able to open up about his sexuality to his peers. It wasn’t until he moved to Tokyo from Osaka and joined the company that he made the decision to start his “occasional closet life”. Meanwhile, in high school, Ken had friends that accepted him, and connected with an AFAB *kōhai* who also transitioned. Kasai’s (2021) survey found that 3.9 per cent of middle school students and 10.1 per cent of high school students had friends who identified as LGBT. A move toward more inclusive education for LGBT+ students is happening. In April 2016 MEXT published a guideline entitled, “Implementing detailed measures for students concerning gender identity disorder”, which, along with discussing measures for better accommodating trans students, also explains sexual orientation and calls for consideration of LGB students (Hattori, 2019). Some schools have started to relax regulations around school uniforms, with middle schools in Tokyo’s Setagaya and Nakano Cities allowing students freely choose skirts or pants regardless of assigned sex at birth from Spring 2020 (Sakane, 2019; “Two Tokyo wards”, 2019). In a 2020 study of 1200 mothers of middle school and high school children conducted by Kankō (2021), a manufacturer of school uniforms, 15.9 per cent of respondents indicated that the school had made considerations for LGBTQ students with regards to uniform, and 53 per cent believed that students should be allowed to choose skirts, pants, ribbons, neckties, and so forth freely. In 2017 the National Basic Policy for the Prevention of Bullying was updated to include protections for gender and sexual minority students ("Japan: Anti-bullying policy", 2017). Starting in 2020, "Women's" universities across Japan, including Tokyo's Ochanomizu University and Nara Women's University, have begun to allow the enrolment of AMAB students (Nakamura, 2022). The *Ally Teacher's Tool Kit* (Rebit, 2021) and the film *Watashi wa Watashi: Over the Rainbow* (Dir. Masuda, 2017)[42] have been made available as resources in schools. All students should have access to learning environments where they can have fun, make friends, and participate fully as themselves, without having to worry about how they may be perceived due to physical or mental challenges, what they look like, or how they dress.

5.3.3 Health

Conventional wisdom dictates that biological sex is binary and fixed: we are born either female or male. This essentialist logic produces a notion of gender that is also binary and fixed: woman or man. Attached to these categories are norms, values, and roles, along with ideas of femininity and masculinity that are culturally and historically dependent. Second-wave feminism worked to challenge this binary, arguing that gender is a social construct, thereby exposing, in the Butlerian sense, the performativity of gender: gender is not something one is, it is something one does, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts, a verb rather than a noun, a "doing" rather than a "being" (Butler, 1990/2006, p. 25). As our understanding of biology evolves, and the hegemony of the scientific community erodes, we recognise that sex too is neither binary nor fixed, and can express itself in complex ways. Slowly, intersex is being recognised not as an abnormality that should be corrected, but as a natural variation in human biology. Still, common sense perpetuates ideas of what it means to be a woman in society, and what it means to be a man in society. As explained in section 5.1.2, gender confirmation surgery was illegal in Japan until 1996. A result of the "blue-boy trial" ruling was that Japanese doctors were reluctant even to counsel patients about sex-change procedures and those seeking gender confirmation surgeries (GCS) had to travel abroad, initially to Morocco (McLelland, 2004). Later, the US and then Thailand emerged as preferred venues—although there was still no counselling available in Japan either before or after an operation. Even today, people in Japan seeking GCS elect to do the process overseas in countries such as Thailand, which known for its so-called "medical tourism" (see Aizura, 2010). In *umareru seibetsu o machigaeta* ("The gender I was born with was wrong"), Konishi Mafuyu (2017) details her GCS experience in Thailand in its entirety. With its detailed description of each step in the process, as well as the engaging visual format, this manga could serve as a resource for other trans people considering surgery as an option. The prohibitive cost of GCS in Japan, even with welfare support, prompts trans individuals to look elsewhere. Yoshi spoke about his experience:

> *When I knew my company was going through with the merger, I went to a gender clinic; I would have to do a year of counselling in order to get surgery; much quicker process overseas; long waiting list for surgery ... Initial hospital wasn't taking any more patients for surgery, so I would have to start the whole process from scratch; I was extremely disheartened*

Ambiguity is not tolerated in the legal sphere. At the time of writing, as a legal category "x-gender" is not officially recognised in Japan, but has been in Australia and New Zealand. Yoshi was hoping for a time when he wouldn't have to get surgery to change the gender marker on his *koseki*. As it stands, laws and medical systems in Japan pathologise trans people, labelling them as having GID, and leaving them with no alternative but to undergo unnecessary and invasive medical procedures in order to secure official documents that reflect their gender identity (see also section 5.2.2).

Scott (2018) notes the discursive shift from stigmatisation to medicalisation in framing LGBT struggles, one of the key moments being the transition from a character failing to something innate: the "born this way" proposition. As discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.2.1) and chapter 3 (section 3.2.1), this proposition offers political benefits and works to destigmatise queer identities by situating sexual and romantic orientation, as well as gender identity, as biological phenomena, rather than as a (morally reprehensible) selfish choice. In the context of Japan, in what Itani (2011) refers to as "transsexual fundamentalism", registration rigidly based on the GID diagnosis has produced two, hierarchically positioned subgroups of gender queer people: transsexual individuals with a GID diagnosis who are legally and socially recognised as legitimate and those without GID diagnosis who are thus undeserving of such social legal recognition: "if you are sick, you deserve to be cured, but if you are not sick, you are just perverted" (p. 302). In analysing Sugiyama Fumino's autobiographical work, *Double happiness* (2006), Itani (2011) recognises the power of labels to discursively affirm one's existence, as well as the difficult choice that marginalised people make in identification. Sugiyama chooses to identify as someone with a "disorder" and in doing so is positioned by prevailing discourse as someone who is essentially trans; a coherent narrative of self that can be traced to birth. In her work on the identity category *x jendā* in Japan, Dale (2018) notes that gender identity is not formed in personal isolation but rather through negotiation: “through interpersonal relationships and how each individual desires to be recognised in intimate relations with others” (p. 178). Attached to identity labels are stereotypes and expectations. Although the concept of GID is relatively new in Japan, it has already been shaped by medical and legal discourse, as well as by the media. Defining categorically the criteria for what constitutes a “true” trans person, this medical and legal model of transness intrinsically privileges some individuals over others. As Itani (2011) concludes: “Diagnosis cannot exist without criteria … therefore it is impossible for GID to function as an inclusive identity category … [and] furthermore, by confining transgender identity to a medical condition, it focuses the source of the problem in the individual rather than in the social environment” (p. 303). Thus, opportunities to problematise wider institutional injustices and seek solutions for systemic change are forgone.

Another area in which individual intervention (and individual blame) is prioritised over scrutinising social environment is the phenomenon of suicide. Japan has one of the highest suicide rates in the world (OECD, 2020b), with overwork and pressure to conform, as well as a reluctance to report depression considered major contributing factors (see Kobayashi, 2018). Research has shown that LGBT people in Japan are at heightened risk of suicide (Yakushi et al., 2016). For example, the Reach Online 2008 survey (Hidaka et al., 2009) indicated that approximately 25 per cent of non-heterosexual male respondents and 21 per cent of non-heterosexual female respondents have attempted suicide, compared with 5 per cent of heterosexual male respondents and 11 per cent of heterosexual female respondents. Meanwhile, DiStefano’s (2008) ethnographic study found that suicidality and self-harm among the LGBT participants (*n* = 84) were driven by (a) a homophobic/transphobic environment and the disclosure decision; (b) various antecedents to poor mental health; and (c) factors unrelated to identifying as LGBT, particularly unemployment and debt in the context of a protracted national economic decline. An analysis of recorded suicide deaths between 2009 and 2018 taken from the Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office database revealed that, among the 17,638 people who died by suicide, 84 (0.5%) were identified as LGBT people, of which the largest proportion was gay males (51.2%), followed by trans people (42.9%) (Sakai & Tanifuji, 2021). Compared with suicides among non-LGBT people, there were several differences in the circumstances surrounding suicides among LGBT people, namely method of suicide, source of income, and number of household members (transgender people). Importantly, the researchers expect that the data does not necessarily reflect the actual number of LGBT people who died by suicide and that it should not be construed as the sucidality rate of the LGBT population. Crucially, speaking up about suicide, as well as speaking out about mental health in general, is a challenge.

A review of 19 studies of mental-health related stigma in Japan found that attitudes and behaviours toward people with mental health issues were characterised by prejudice (e.g., associated with weakness of personality; unable to recover; considered dangerous, etc.) and social distance (Ando et al., 2013). On the one hand, people are reluctant to open up about their mental health, and on the other hand there is a lack of understanding around mental illness, as well as high rates of institutionalisation of people deemed mentally unfit (see generally Inose, 2020). In Japan, *mentaru herusu* (mental health) is beginning to receive serious consideration. In a nation-wide survey conducted by NHK (2015), 40 per cent of respondents (n = 2,431) said that their health was at least somewhat affected due to their LGBT status. Comparisons have also been made across SOGI diverse groups. Using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6), a survey of workers conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020) found that LGBT+ respondents (n = 894) scored higher on the scale—indicating poorer mental health—than their cisgender heterosexual (cis-het) counterparts (n = 1511). In particular, 11.9 per cent of trans respondents (n = 101), and 8.4 per cent of LGB respondents (n = 574) scored 15 or higher; out of a possible score of 24. Similarly, an analysis of the NijiVoice surveys from 2018 to 2020 (Kimura et al., 2021) revealed that, on average, 31 per cent of trans respondents scored between 13 and 24, compared with 17 per cent and 9.5 per cent of LGBPA+ and cis-het respondents, respectively. When seeking professional support, people who are LGBT+ have to make additional considerations. If the individual's LGBT+ identity is connected to mental health outcomes—being bullied, being harassed, being discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, for instance—they have to decide if, when, and how to come out to the medical health professional. Access to health services, including sexual health services, in general is plagued by heteronormativity. In the Study 2 interviews, Nathan made the point that when you move to a new country, part of the process of settling in includes finding health care professionals. A personal contact living in Kyoto expressed that, despite indicating on the form that he was "*dōseiaisha* (homosexual)", during the consultation with the doctor regarding his sexual health he was told that "no woman will want you as a husband if you don't take care of yourself". Finding information and health resources, especially at the intersection of SOGI diversity and mental health, could pose a challenge for people living in Japan. Established in 2016, Tokyo-based peer support network *Colourful heart*[43] presents an opportunity for connection and inclusion, rather than rejection.

5.3.4 State

Japan is not an immigration nation. Amidst the ongoing labour shortage, in 2018, the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act ([ICRRA] 1990) was revised in an attempt to bolster Japan's "unskilled foreign labour" ranks (Suzuki, 2020). During the 2nd meeting of the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, then prime minister Abe Shinzō was quick to emphasise that the government "would not be adopting an immigration policy" (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2018). Despite an increasingly diverse population (see generally Shimoji & Ogaya, 2020), an attitude of exclusion pervades government policy and wider society. Indeed, in her assessment of the ICRRA revisions, Suzuki concluded that it continues to expand the definition of "illegal" foreign residents, with the ongoing aim of achieving tighter residency management. Administratively, Japanese people are distinguished by their entry (*nyūseki*) into the *koseki seido* (Chapman, 2012). The *koseki* document stays filed in the city office in the *honseki* ("legal domicile"—usually the family's or head of household's place of birth or ancestral home). Meanwhile, instead of *koseki*, foreigners, including former colonial subjects, the so-called *ōrudo kamā* (old-comer) immigrants, register for a *jyūminhyō* ("certificate of residence") in the city office in which they live.[44] Their status of residence is marked on their *zairyū kādo* ("residence card"), which they must carry on their person at all times or risk punitive fines or imprisonment. Japanese people must also register for *jūminhyō*. As the *jūminhyō* is a record of an individual's current address, each time the individual moves, they must notify both the old and new (if applicable) municipality (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, n.d.). The *jūminhyō* is required by Japanese law for tax and census purposes, as well as to access services such as national health insurance, the basic pension, welfare, and so on. Prior to July 2012 when amendments to the Basic Resident Registration Act came into effect, foreign residents did not register at the local level for a *jūminhyō*, and were instead registered at the federal level under the *gaikokujin tōroku seido* (Alien Registration System [ARS]; Chapman, 2012). This two-tier system—*koseki* and *jūminhyō* for Japanese, and ARS for foreigners—led to numerous impediments and misunderstandings for multinational families, as well as a requirement that foreigners apply for re-entry permits whenever leaving Japan. Chapman argues that, while the 2012 amendments are a welcome step forward—allowing Japanese nationals and foreign nationals to coexist bureaucratically in one registration system—they do not adequately address the needs of Japan's diverse population.

In what he refers to as the *politics of anti-multiculturalism*, Eisenberg (2009) argues that *nihonjinron* has played a major role in Japanese nationalist politics: "In light of this preoccupation with Japanese identity … politicians can exploit these assumptions about core identity in attacking foreigners. [*Nihonjinron*] has been built into the social fabric of Japanese society for centuries, but now seems to manifest itself in the political rhetoric of anti-immigration" (p. 94). *Nihonjinron*, prominent examples of which include Nakane's (1967) theory of *tate shakai* ("vertical society"), and Doi's (1971) concept of *amae* ("dependency"), work to naturalise, in a matter-of-fact manner, the notion that the Japanese people are sociologically, psychologically, and even biologically unique. For example, the "fact" that the intestines of Japanese people are longer (than those of westerners) circulates in common knowledge discourse (see Raskin, 2015 and Mahoroba, 2018 for overview). During the late 1980s, then Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Hata Tsutomu made this assertion in relation to Japan's strict import quota on American beef and oranges at the time (Robinson, 1987; Haberman, 1988). This claim has been debunked by scientific research (e.g., Saunders et al., 1995; Nagata et al., 2013). Scholars such as Yoshino (1992), Revell (1997), and Lummis (2007) point to Benedict's (1946/2006) text *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (translated into Japanese in 1948) as the progenitor of *nihonjinron*. Described as a work of "political literature", The Crysanthumum and the Sword was intended as a primer for the United States government to understand "the most alien enemy", positioning Japan as "the absolute Other" (Lummis, 2007, p. 3). In a process of self-othering, *nihonjinron* operate on this same logic: Japaneseness is rendered into being only in (diametric) opposition to images of the west. For example, Georgie, interviewed in Study 1, spoke about honesty in the context of talking about sexuality and coming out to friends and family. He argued that in "western culture" not telling the truth amounts to wrongdoing (in the eyes of god), leading to feelings of guilt. Meanwhile, "[for the] Japanese", not telling the truth is not necessarily a bad thing. Rather, truth-telling is contingent on how others will "digest this information" and subsequently, the avoidance of causing trouble for others (*meiwaku wo kakenai*) takes precedence over telling the truth. Contrasting the west and Japan in this way hinted at the "guilt culture" and "shame culture"—translated into Japanese as *tsumi no bunka* and *haji no bunka* respectively—dichotomy that was popularised by the Crysanthumum and the Sword.

With one of its core concepts as "Unity in Diversity", Tokyo 2020 was intended as a celebration and a showcase of Japan's "vibrant" multiculturalism. It is no coincidence that Osaka Naomi, a Japanese citizen whose father is from Haiti, was chosen to light the Olympic Cauldron during the opening ceremony. Subsequent to the event, Osaka experienced backlash online; she wasn't seen as "Japanese enough" to represent Japan (Rich, 2021). There was also at least one Black musician who was meant to perform in the opening ceremony, but was ultimately cut, allegedly because the organisers wanted to present an image of ethnic unity (Ostlere, 2021). Certainly, xenophobic and racist attitudes and discourse are not unique to Japan. An affliction of many western states, Australian anthropologist Ghassan Hage (2003) describes a nationalist attitude that is obsessed with border politics and fraught with anxiety about the state of the nation as "paranoid nationalism". Here, "paranoia" denotes "a pathological form of fear based on an excessively fragile conception of the self … [and] a tendency to perceive a threat where none exists" (Hage, 2002, p. 63). In post-war Japan, a Japan stripped of its colonies and the structural privileges that came with being the conqueror; many Japanese people project their vulnerability and fear onto ethnic minority groups. The Zainichi Korean community in particular has been an ongoing target of racial prejudice, facing both top-down government fiscal discrimination and bottom-up grassroots anti-Korean sentiment (*ken-kanryū*) and hate crimes (Kim-Wachutka, 2020; Park-Kim, 2020). Further, black people and other people of colour have been subjected to racial profiling by the police. For example, on the 27th of January 2021, English teacher Alonzo Omotegawa was stopped and searched by two police officers in Tokyo Station. Alonzo captured the incident on video. During the video, one of the officers said that, in his experience "people wearing stylish clothes and *doreddo hea* (dreadlocks) tend to carry drugs" (The Black Experience Japan, 2021). Alonzo is a Japanese national; his mother is Japanese and his father is from the Bahamas.

In December 2021 the National Police Agency issued an advisory to all prefectural police forces to avoid questioning people "in a way that could be perceived at racially motivated" ("Japan police urge", 2022). Meanwhile, the *Trafficking in persons report* (Department of State, 2022) found that the Japanese government did not have any laws that prohibited employers, recruiters, or labour agents from confiscating either Japanese or foreign workers' passports, travel, or other identity documents, except for technical intern training program (TITP) participants, for whom passport or residential identification confiscation was prohibited. However, the government did not report if it enforced this law or penalised any employers or agencies for withholding TITP participants' documents in 2021. Established in 1993, the TITP aims contribute to developing countries by accepting people from these countries for a certain period of time and transferring skills through on-the-job training (Immigration Bureau, 2017). Out of Japan's reluctance to admit immigrant families into the country, the TITP has emerged as a "side-door mechanism" for importing unskilled labour to perform dirty, dangerous, and low-paying jobs on the promise that they will return to their country of origin in due time (Eisenberg, 2009). Human rights abuses faced by participants in the TITP have been reported on (see, for example, Hayakawa & Barnes, 2017), and there have been calls to abolish the program, which is seen by some as "modern-day slavery" (Kunizaki, 2022). While noting the attempts the government has made to promote *tabunka kyōsei* ("multicultural coexistence"), Suzuki (2020) is critical of a system that unilaterally excludes foreign nationals: "It is impossible to create equal relationships in a society where there is division between those who are monitoring and those who are monitored by them, as only one side is constantly exposed to the possibility of exclusion" (p. 147). The precarious lives of foreign nationals in Japan are made even more precarious at the intersections. Amando spoke about the difficulties he and his husband Nathan faced when entering the country:

… the first point that I realized this is not going to be easy because we are at the airport and of course, me having the [work] visa I can get my residency card straight away and we tried to go through together because [Nathan's] got the [temporary] visa and he said well we are together. So suddenly, "Oh, see there, the sign?" The guy came back and said, "Oh no, you go to the normal security thing and you wait here."

Their marriage was not recognised by the Japanese state, and as such, they needed to go through the long and arduous process of securing a designated activities visa for Nathan; they were ultimately rejected (see chapter 10).

5.3.5 Economy

As a nation state, Japan is characterised by neoliberalism, late-stage capitalism, and post-modernity with a majority middle-class population (see generally McCormack & Kawabata, 2020). In the late 1980s, Japan shifted from a country that exports its workers to other countries to a country that imports workers (Suzuki, 2020). Since then, the number of foreign residents has continued to rise year on year. Given Japan's decreasing population and labour shortages, the utilisation of foreign human resources has been encouraged as part of the government's growth strategy. However, as discussed in section 5.3.4, Japan has been very careful not to position itself as an immigrant country. Instead, the government has positioned (Japanese) "women" as the face of economic stimulation in Japan. The centrepiece of this campaign has been "womenomics". Kathy Matsui of Goldman Sachs coined the term *womenomics*, publishing her first report on womenomics in August 1999 (Takeda, 2018). In subsequent reports she identified four items in particular that were having a negative impact on female employment: insufficient childcare and nursing care support; tax obstacles; an inadequate focus on diversity in the private and public sectors; and rigid immigration laws (Matsui et al., 2005). In 2013, then prime minister Abe Shinzō Abe introduced the LDPs "Womenomics" policy, intended to increase women's employment and empowerment, with the key performance indicator being that, by the year of the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020, the proportion of women in executive positions should increase to 30 per cent;

this was later reduced to 10 percent (Macnaughtan, 2015). Macnaughtan points out that the 30 per cent target is not new. Rather, the target has been a key strategy of the Gender Equality Bureau, a division of the Japanese Cabinet Office, since its establishment in 2001; at that time Abe was directly opposed to the promotion of gender equality. Most recently, as part of the "#HereWeGo203030 challenge", the goal of a female executive ratio of 30 percent or more has been taken up by Keidanren, with 2030 set as the target year of realisation. As will be shown in chapter 6 (section 6.2), diversity management in Japan emphasises the promotion of women in the workforce. Women in Japan are caught between discourse of reproduction and productivity. On the one hand, they are expected to be soft and nurturing and biologically available for impregnation for Japan's ongoing nation-building project. On the other hand, they are expected to contribute to the labour force as productive economic citizens. Takeda (2018) noted that the Abe government's policy-making rhetoric demonstrated a lack of informed understanding of the actual state of women's labour in Japan. Similar to the audit studies described in chapter 3 (section 3.2.1), in an experimental study incorporating *rirekisho* (curriculum vitae), Baron (2020) measured discriminatory attitudes among the Japanese public (n = 2762). The results indicated that respondents showed a clear preference for hypothetical (Japanese) female applicants, while hypothetical non-Japanese applicants, especially those coded Korean and, to a lesser extent, Chinese, yielded substantial negative attitudinal effects. A major limitation of the study, as pointed out by Baron, is that the sample was drawn from the general population of Japan, and thus does not necessarily reflect the attitudes and actual decisions made by employers.

Nevertheless, these results provide a useful launching point in the discussion of representation in the labour market. As revealed in chapter 1 (section 1.1.2) and chapter 2 (section 2.2.2), women continue to be underrepresented in the workforce, especially in positions of power. Indeed, the Global Gender Gap Report reveals that, of 153 countries, Japan ranks 115th in the economic participation and opportunity subindex (World Economic Forum, 2020). During the interview with Yuki and Renata, Yuki told a story of how she was offered a job by a famous graphic designer. Recognising that she was in her late 20s, he asked her questions like, "Do you have a boyfriend; are you going to get married soon?" before revealing that they had recently hired someone who had "unfortunately" become pregnant. Here, pregnancy is framed as a liability in the labour market. Also revealed here is the way that worker's bodies are gendered and sexed. In Japan, women's participation has historically been characterised by the so-called M-curve phenomenon (see, for example, Macnaughtan, 2015). That is, women choosing to quit their job upon marriage or childbirth, resulting in a dip in labour force participation. However, data shows that the dip is becoming increasingly shallow (see, for example, Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office, 2021). The passage of the 1985 Equal Employment Opportunities Law (EEOL) in Japan was a major step forward for increasing women's rights because their exclusion from full participation in the workforce became recognised at the national level. This law prohibits gender-based discrimination in recruiting, hiring, pay, and promotion (Mouer & Kawanishi, 2005). It was further revised it in 1997 in order to prohibit sex discrimination more rigidly and to include sanctions against violations. Nonetheless, significantly, there is no penalty clause for employers who engage in discriminatory employment practices. Moreover, the EEOL has precipitated in a two track system, which differentiates between women and men: The *ippanshoku* ("administrative track") for women and the *sōgōshoku* ("management track") for men (see Kumamoto-Healy, 2005). In response to this de facto delineation, the *josei katsuyō suishin hō* (Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace) took effect in April 2016. It stipulated that companies with more than 300 employees, as well as central and local governments, are required to draw up and publish a plan for increasing the employment of women in managerial positions according to specified targets (Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office, 2018). It is indicated that this act is only temporary, with a ten-year term limit.

Despite these laws and government rhetoric, the Japanese labour market remains strongly stratified by gender. Women tend to work in lower-earning industries such as service industries, and men are overrepresented in higher-earning industries such as management and engineering (Hori, 2009). Arguaby, this vertical segregation between women and men workers is closely linked with a heteronormative expectation of marriage: after getting married to an opposite-sex partner, men become the primary breadwinners, and women concentrate on housework while staying home or working part time (Brinton, 2007; Roberts, 2020). Gendered expectations create bias in employers' and colleagues' assessments about worker performance and stigmatise those who deviate from expectations. Even before transitioning to the labour force, teachers, parents, and peers, may encourage young women and men to pursue different careers (Brinton, 2007). Gendered careers may also be the result of structural discrimination. For example, in 2018, after Tokyo Medical University was found to have tampered with the scores of female applicants from as early as 2006, an inquiry was launched and several other universities were implicated ("Japan medical schools", 2018). It was understood that there was a "silent understanding" to reduce the number of female entrants over concerns that women would become pregnant and leave the workplace. Young Japanese people reproduce occupational gender inequality by basing their career plans on gendered, heteronormative expectations (Mathews, 2003). Women in Japan are expected to leave work or prioritise work less after marriage (Nemoto 2016), and, as such, many young women seek careers that allow for flexible hours (Mathews 2004). They expect to increase their life stability through supporting their husbands' careers and keeping the home in order. In contrast, Expecting to become the primary breadwinner, young men seek careers in large, established companies that will provide sufficient income for their future households, and they expect to stay with the same employers for a long duration, possibly until their retirement (Brinton, 2011). The discourse of stability emphasises the comfort of not having to worry about future employment and finances. As discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.3.3) this same discourse was found to be reproduced by young Japanese LGBQ people (see Ueno, 2021). In the study, the LBQ women deviated from gendered career expectations in Japan by pursuing higher earning careers, not necessarily out of liberation, but rather out of economic necessity. Meanwhile, despite their reduced financial responsibilities relative to straight men, many of the GBQ men focused on their careers rather than pursuing personal interests, thus reinforcing the traditional career expectation for men.

Economic interest in LGBT people as consumers rose in the early 2010s, with business magazines like *Shūkan Tōyō Keizai* (Zhang et al., 2012) and *Shūkan Daiyamondo* (Ikedomi et al., 2013) revealing the value of a "huge, unknown market (*shirarezaru kyodai shijō*)". In 2015, Dentsu Diversity Lab released the results of a survey that valued the domestic "LGBT market" at about 5.9 trillion yen (Dentsu Inc., 2015). Meanwhile, in 2016, the advertising firm Hakuhdo DY Group established a think tank, the *LGBT Research Institute*, to support businesses eager to target this untapped market (Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc., 2016; see also Yotsumoto & Senba, 2017). Products and services that specifically cater toward LGBT+ people have been developed. For example, in 2015, Lifenet Insurance introduced a life insurance plan for same-sex couples. It is interesting to note that as of August 2022, the first image on the top page of Lifenet's website depicts an apparent heterosexual couple with two children, advertising their "family insurance". Further down on the page, there is a link for those new to choosing insurance: "Understand what insurance you need for your lifestage." Again the heterosexual family is depicted alongside an apparent heterosexual bride and groom. Even when their intention is to be more inclusive, companies are complicit in uncritically reproducing heteronormativity in their advertising and marketing efforts. Yotsumoto and Senba critically examine the discourse that LGBT+ people are affluent, and also problematise the segmentation of the market in the first place: "LGBT people are just normal (*futsū*) consumers with normal needs" (p. 93). Meanwhile, the idea that LGBT+ people have a lot of disposable income that they are willing to spend may stem from expectations such as, “they don’t have to raise children”, and “they are living in the moment”, as well as from exposure to gay people who are well off, such as Apple CEO Tim Cook. Actual data paints a different picture. According to NijiVoice surveys (see Kimura et al., 2021) as well as a survey conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020), LGBT+ respondents were making less than cis-het respondents, and in particular, a higher proportion of trans people were making less than two million yen per year. Subjected to exploitation as consumers and silencing mechanisms as producers, LGBT+ people are vulnerable in an economy that reproduces the gender binary and normative modes of intimacy (i.e., monogamous, heterosexual marriage and children) through the way it rewards gendered workers.

5.3.6 Media

While gender expression is primarily used to communicate gender identity, it may also inform assumptions around sexuality. The implicit inversion model (Kite & Deaux, 1987; McCreary, 1994) suggests that people perceive homosexual men as similar to heterosexual women, and homosexual women as similar to heterosexual men.[45] Case in point, while interviewing Takeshi he concluded that the interviewer did not look gay. When the interviewer asked, “What does a gay person look like?” Takeshi replied, “Like a female; way of talking, way of behaviour”. Meanwhile Shin and Hide both expressed that, on the basis of how they dressed and acted, people around them would not perceive them to be gay. Similarly, Yuki and Renata talked about how lesbian women are typically “tomboyish”, have short hair and wear pants: “You can tell that she's lesbian without her saying it” (Yuki). Ahead of an actual declaration, people use visual cues to make assessments about the sexuality of others. Schemas of understanding based on the gender/sex binary model can be internalised not only by heterosexual people as a (prejudicial) stereotype, but also by LGBT+ people; a form of auto-stereotype. Sexual inversion stereotypes continue to dominate popular discourse and media representation of LGBT+ people in Japan, leaving little room for more diverse expression. Kasai (2016) notes that various Japanese television informational programs as well as entertainment shows present LGBT people as cross-dressers, and that LGBT people are often portrayed in derogatory ways or otherwise as objects of humour and ridicule. In the aforementioned ReBit (2021) elementary school survey, 59.2 per cent of respondents indicated that they had observed, on the television, in manga, and so forth, words like “*okama*”, “*homo*” and “*onē*” being used to laugh at or make fun of someone (*n* = 849). From a young age, media shapes expectations around what is normal, expected behaviour. One of the questions asked in the interviews concerned the representation of LGBT+ in the media in Japan. Most of the interviewees felt that what little representation they were aware of was highly problematic, with many voicing their opinion of the effect that *onē tarento*[46] are having on people's perception of what LGBT+ is in Japan. First of all, when it came to the image of a gay man, people's only point of reference seemed to be *onē* or *okama*.

This kind of conflation of identities was occurring on multiple levels. Before working as a photo retoucher, Petra was working in a bar. One night, a party was held for a friend of her manager. The friend owned a bar in Ni chōme, and he brought his staff along with some regular customers. While she was working, Petra overheard what the kitchen staff were saying and called them out on it:

> They [kitchen staff] were saying that they ["bear" guests] were being *onē-san* and that they wanted to be girls. And I'm like, "No, they're clearly happy about being men. They happen to like other men, but that doesn't mean they want to be women. Do *not* mix up, homosexual with trans. Come on, what the hell is wrong with you guys!"

Drawing on media-driven stereotypes, the kitchen staff came to the conclusion that because these men were gay, they must want to present as, or indeed, become women. Petra was angry because she felt that it invalidated the real struggle that some trans people have: the discomfort of being in their body, and the desire to change their body. Joke or not, the words of the kitchen staff minimise and trivialise this experience. Airi recognises this same conflation. She also laments the reality that queer women are basically non-existent as far as mainstream media is concerned:

> … people just, kind of, stick to what they see, which is the media, saying that gay people is one thing and it's *okama*. And there's no trans representation; barely. And there's no representation of queer women. So I think that the way that media conflates okama with trans is also a problem …

At the same time Study 1 of the current inquiry commenced, a character that was created in the 1980s, *homooda homo*, was revived by comedy double act Tunnels. Crafted around harmful stereotypes of gay men—effeminate, uses feminine suffixes, speaks with a lisp; the name itself incorporating a derogatory term—the portrayal was met with swift criticism, prompting the network to issue a formal apology ("Fuji TV chief apologizes", 2017). Kazuki, who works in media, reflected on the incident:

> It was [a] very big impact for us, because in my childhood that was very [much] allowed; no one thought that was wrong or humiliating [to] someone. But in these years when they do that, many people made emails and telephone and some [of] my friends went to the TV station [and said] that this is discrimination. And [consequently] the station apologised about that … here [in Japan], creators are very annoyed … [they] must be careful about [how they treat] LGBT

issues … creators think they have right to make what they want: *hyōgen no jiyu*; the right to express … an [older] creator said that if all the humour related to LGBT [is] banned, the show will be very boring … I was really disappointed about that. But he was *kenryokusha*; he has power in this company … I told [him] that I myself don't think what Tunnels did was right, but he didn't understand [in the end].

The public has the potential to hold organisations and governments accountable for their actions, and (re)shape what is deemed acceptable in society. At the same time, it is important to recognise that those in power, those who decide what knowledge is produced, are, as Kazuki point out, often older, and may have different values and expectations around what is deemed acceptable.

Along with lack of representation of queer women in the media, there is virtually zero representation at the intersection of queer and foreign in the Japanese media landscape. One notable exception is *ototo no otto* ("My Brother's Husband"). Originally a manga by Tagame Gengorō, known for his BDSM gay erotica, *ototo no otto* was developed into a three-part mini-series for the NHK in 2018. It tells the story of single father Yaichi and his daughter Kana, as they come to terms with Mike's, the husband of Yaichi's deceased twin brother, sudden appearance at their home. NHK decided to cast then Japan-based Estonian (former sumō wrestler), Baruto Kaito, rather than an actual Canadian; likewise, they cast someone who is apparently straight and married to a woman with child, rather than a gay man. Casting Baruto makes sense from a logistical and aesthetic perspective, and in an ideal world, actors should not necessarily be limited to depicting characters that reflect their actual lived experience. However, this still represents a missed opportunity for a person who is LGBT+ to play the role. This issue of lack of opportunities for people of minority groups to represent themselves in stories about them is by no means limited to LGBT+ or to Japan. When people who are LGBT+ are represented in the media, there is a tendency to rely on shorthand and stereotypes rather than creating or portraying fully fleshed out, three-dimensional characters or experiences. The increased visibly of individuals that challenge traditional media representations aids in the normalisation and demystification of queer subjectivities in Japan. More than anything else, the current inquiry revealed how sorely visibility and representation were for moving the conversation forward on LGBT+ inclusion in Japan. Tomoko, who was interviewed with Rin and Jun, had this to say:

I think if there is something you can [do to] change the Japanese mindset, then it should be a role model. Somebody who was very popular; professional baseball, for example. For example, [name of baseball player]. If he said, "I'm gay, and I'm proud of it", then the world would change; the world is going to change, you know?

Diversity in the media matters. It's the start of a conversion. It teaches you about what is normal and what is acceptable in society. And, it can teach you about who you are. Arguably, as well as acting as a powerful normalising mechanism, diverse media representation and the dissemination of correct knowledge linked to LGBT+ subjectivities is crucial in connecting LGBT+ people with others, as well as with understandings of themselves.

Notes

1. In a review of *Queer Japan from the Pacific War to the Internet Age* (McLelland, 2005), Vincent (2010) criticises McLelland for placing too much emphasis on queer culture in Japan writing: "Perhaps in reaction to those who have overemphasised the prevalence of homophobia in Japan, McLelland almost completely avoids any discussion of the suffering experienced by Japanese 'queers' at the hands of mainstream society. The result is that one comes away from the book with the impression that Japan is a very queer place indeed, a place where virtually anything goes" (p. 178). In light of this, the author is compelled to present a more balanced picture of the experiences of LGBT+ individuals in Japan, in particular providing a counter-point to the pervasive narrative of tolerance reproduced in state and (English language) scholarly texts.
2. Furukawa (1994) notes that in Japan, because female sexual subjectivity came into question only in the modern period, tracing the genealogy of female homosexuality is difficult. This is echoed by Leupp (1995), although, in his book *Male colors: The construction of male homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan* (1995), he does allocate one section to women's sexuality, in which instances of "lesbian relationships" (p. 189) in premodern Japan are discussed.
3. Lesbos is the etymological origin of the word "lesbian", presumably "… the most ancient term in our current lexicon of sexuality" (Halperin, 2002, p. 49).
4. In a review of *Takarazuka: Sexual politics and popular culture in modern Japan* (1998), Kano (1999) observes that Robertson neither denies or assumes the presence of lesbianism in Takarazuka, choosing not to repeat all of what was said by the actors and fans and instead focusing considerable attention on the sensationalised reporting of female sexuality in the popular press at the time. Thus, voices of the actors and fans themselves are distinctly lacking in the text.
5. Based on ideas of Confucianism, the Tokugawa government devised the *shinōkōshō* ("four divisions of society"): the samurai; the farming peasants; the artisans; and the merchants. The *chōnin* ("merchants") represented the lowest caste in this system.
6. For example, in the countryside, rural administrators were concerned that male-male sexuality diverted the energies of the peasantry away from their appointed labours (Pflugfelder, 1999).
7. Mori's *wita sekusuarisu* (Vita Sexualis) is a semifictionalised account of his youth and early adulthood. With an elite military training facility as its setting, the novel explores the tensions between the old regime of the *kōha* ("hard liners") who embodied samurai masculinity and practiced *nanshoku*, and the new regime of the *nanpa* ("dandies") who wore elegant clothing and chased after geisha (Mori, 1971). Three weeks after its publication, Vita Sexualis was banned from circulation by the Japanese government due to its content (Keene, 1999).
8. From a postcolonial studies standpoint, of which Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is a foundational text, orientalism refers to a worldview that positions the east (the "orient") as inferior, primitive, and irrational (but also as exotic and alluring), in opposition to a

superior, progressive, and rational west (the "occident"). For a discussion about Japan's relationship with orientalism, both the book and the term, see Nishihara (2007). In the chapter, Nishihara describes how Japanese orientalism positions Japan as both subject and object, and how Japanese scholars (re)produce auto-orientalist discourse.

9. Also in 1911, two women who worked as maids jumped into the Tamagawa River in Tokyo together in an attempted double suicide and were rescued by police officers. Because of their higher social status, the women's school graduates were of more interest to mass media than the two maids (Wu, 2007).
10. Upon an extensive review of early 20th century newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, Robertson (1998) concluded that "girls and women almost exclusively were singled out as the sources of sexual deviance and social disorder and as the targets of acrimonious debates about the relationship of sex, gender, and sexuality" (p. 132).
11. In Japanese, *nabe* and *kama* mean "pan" and "pot" respectively and the addition of the honorific prefix *o* renders *onabe* and *okama*. In her analysis of the documentary Shinjuku Boys (1995), Maree (2003) describes *onabe* as a (self-referential) term for assigned female at birth women who identify as non-female, sexually desire women, and typically cross-dress. Meanwhile, *okama* has been used since the Edo period to refer to passive (effeminate) homosexual men (Toyama, 2007). Today, similar to the English-language slur "faggot", *okama* is often used in a pejorative manner.
12. McLelland et al. (2007) notes that in the 1960s "lesbian" was first transliterated as *resubian*—most likely borrowed from French literature. This was later replaced by *rezubian*, reflecting its American pronunciation. On the other hand, Kiyooka (1968) assents that while *rezubian* may be the "correct" way to pronounce the word, she uses *resubian* because the term itself "comes from [the name of] the isle of Lesbos (*Resubosu*), where the ancient Greek poet Sappho was born" (p. 84).
13. As McLelland (2004) explains, the origin of the term "blue boys" is obscure but seems to have already been widespread in Europe before the advent of Le Carrousel. One likely derivation is from a portrait by Thomas Gainsborough entitled *The Blue Boy* (1770) which depicts a very feminine aristocratic youth dressed in blue satin.
14. Scholars such as Ishida and Murakami (2006) argue that this is in fact the second gay boom in Japan. McLelland (2006) places the first gay boom in 1958, when mainstream press began reporting on the rapid increase in the number of *gei bā* (gay bars) in Tokyo.
15. The full name of the law is as follows: *seidōitsusei shōgaisha no seibetsu no toriatsukai no tokurei ni kan suru hōritsu* (Act on Special Cases in Handling Gender Status for Persons with Gender Identity Disorder). It is truncated here for the sake of brevity.
16. Good Aging Yells was founded in 2010 by Matsunaka Gon. For more information see https://goodagingyells.net/about/
17. The project is ongoing, and the photos have gone on to be featured in exhibits and locations across Japan. For example, in 2018 the project partnered with department store Marui in 2018. In the lead up to Tokyo Rainbow Pride week, 250 portraits were hung on the street lights as flags on Koen Street in Shibuya City (Itō, 2018). See also http://outinjapan.com/concept/
18. For more information, see http://www.mrgayworld.com/
19. For more information, see https://pridehouse.jp/legacy/
20. The Japan-based surveys were conducted in 2005 (n = 1096) and 2019 (n = 1353) respectively.
21. "LGBPA+" stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, and asexual.
22. The full name of the organisation, in English, is the *Japan Alliance for Legislation to Remove Social Barriers based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*.

23. GLBT (gay, lesbian, bi, trans) is yet another permutation of “LGBT”, with some representation in the social sciences scholarship, “GLBT Family Studies” being the most prominent example
24. That countries are compared to one another in this way, as if in some kind of competition, is problematic as it implies a universal measure of “correct” development that all nations should pursue.
25. The ILGA report (Mendos et al., 2020) compiled data on all 197 UN Member States, as well as on non-member states, non-independent territories, and subnational jurisdictions within UN Member States. The report grouped countries/regions into four categories: 1. *Constitutional Protection* (constitution explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation); 2. *Broad Protection* (protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation cover at least three of the following fields: employment, health, education, housing and provision of goods and services); 3. *Employment* (legislation in force explicitly protects workers from discrimination based on their sexual orientation in the workplace. The scope of such protection varies from country to country and may or may not cover issues of unfair dismissal, social security, benefits, and so on); and 4. *Limited/Uneven Protection* (protections do not amount to any of the criteria of the other categories, or where employment or broad protection is only available unequally in a few subnational jurisdictions). Seven UN Member States—Argentina, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Japan, Philippines, South Korea, and Vanuatu—and 3 non-UN Member jurisdictions—Hong Kong (SAR China), Guernsey (UK), and the Northern Mariana Islands (USA)—were grouped under the “Limited/Uneven Protection” category.
26. OECD stands for “Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development”, an intergovernmental organisation that currently includes 38 member states. In the report, *Over the Rainbow? The Road to LGBTI Inclusion* (OECD, 2020a), 35 of the 38 countries are represented, as Hungary decided not to participate in the analysis and Colombia and Costa Rica were not yet OECD members when the report was initiated.
27. Section 6 states of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism states that: “The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Olympic Charter shall be secured without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (International Olympic Committee, 2020, p. 12).
28. The three core concepts of Tokyo 2020 are: 1. “Striving for your personal best (Achieving Personal Best)”; 2. “Accepting one another (Unity in Diversity)”; and 3. “Passing on Legacy for the future (Connecting to Tomorrow)”. Under “Unity in Diversity”, differences explicitly mentioned are “race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, level of ability or other status” (Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, 2015, p. 4).
29. From November 2020, a grant of subsidy to obtain the Shibuya City partnership certificate has been offered. The basic type is 50,000 yen, to cover the cost of notarising the contracts (Shibuya City, 2022).
30. Donald Richie (1924-2013) was an openly bisexual American-born author and analyst of Japanese film who lived in Tokyo for most of his life.
31. Although deploying terms such as “[the] west” and “westerners”—intentionally not capitalised—in this text the author does not prescribe to the idea of a monolithic Euro-American culture, nor do they conflate westernisation with modernisation. The author instead is reflecting the Japanese use of the terms *ōbei* (“Euro-America”) and *seiō* (“the occident”) which refer, not to specific countries, but to a “generic West” (Kelsky, 2001, 6) that stands in contrast to Japan. This Japan/west dichotomy was also reflected in interviews in the current study.

32. On the other hand, Shimuzu (2020) argues that the backlash was not in response to the Basic Act for a Gender Equal Society per se, since it had already been involved in the LDP government's conservative and anti-feminist political moves from the beginning.
33. The term *jendā furī* was first used by the Tokyo Women's Foundation in 1995 (Yamaguchi, 2014). It was originally intended to refer to freedom from compulsory gender roles.
34. Also in the answer to question 11, the *keikanzai* (anti-sodomy) law of the Meiji era is mentioned. Curiously, they cite the Wikipedia page "*Nihon ni okeru dōseiai*" (Homosexuality in Japan) as the source of the information. Further, in the updated 2019 edition, a new sentence has been added that acknowledges that *tōjisha* are "still facing various difficulties, and that it is necessary to address this as a policy issue" (LDP SOGI Committee, 2019, p. 20). Whether this acknowledgement is a sign of actual change to come, or if it is merely lip service, is yet to be determined.
35. The Shinto Association of Spiritual Leadership was established in 1969, and is affiliated with *Jinja Honchō*, a religious corporation overseeing Shinto shrines across Japan (Fujisawa, 2022).
36. The parties that proposed the bill were the Japanese Communist Party, Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party, and People's Life Party (now defunct).
37. Article 750 of Japan's Civil Code (1896) states that "a husband and wife shall adopt the surname of the husband or wife in accordance with that which is decided at the time of marriage" (Ministry of Justice). According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2017), in a 2015 survey of 635,156 married couples, 96 per cent took the husband's name.
38. In December 2015, the Supreme Court rejected a lawsuit filed by five plaintiffs who were advocating for a dual surname system (Yan & Wakatsuki, 2015). Then, in June 2021, the Grand Bench of the Supreme Court of Japan ruled that Article 750 of the Civil Code and Article 74, item (i) of the Family Register Act requiring married couples to have the same surname are not in violation of Article 24 of the Constitution of Japan (Ara, 2021).
39. Although not explicitly confirmed, it can be deduced that the group Midori was referring to in her story about children facing discrimination "because they live in certain districts" are the *burakumin* (lit. hamlet people, henceforth Burakumin). Ishikawa (2020) avers that because public prejudices are invoked in any definition of the people concerned, defining the term Burakumin is problematic. Three broad elements are attributed to these prejudices: residence (people who are Burakumin are assumed to live in particular, geographically confined communities known as *hisabetsu buraku*); genealogy (people who are Burakumin are assumed to be the descendants of an outcaste group of people who were associated with *kegare* ["spiritual pollution"] during the Edo period); and occupation (people who are Burakumin are assumed to work in jobs involving the slaughter of animals and leather work [Inoue, 1969; Neary, 2010; Sugimoto, 2014; Saitō, 2017]). Despite the lack of efficacy of these elements, as well as a gamut of nation-wide assimilationist policies and the enactment of antidiscrimination law, prejudice towards Burakumin remains (see Ishikawa, 2020, for overview). The latest iteration of this discrimination is Internet-based disclosure of Buraku communities, effectively outing Burakumin people, who are otherwise completely indistinguishable from "mainstream" Japanese people.
40. For more information on Japan's foster care system, see Rainbow Foster Care: https://rainbowfostercare.jimdofree.com/english/
41. Serano (2016) defines cissexism as "the belief or assumption that cis people's gender identities, expressions, and embodiments are more natural and legitimate than those of trans people" (n.p.).

42. *Watashi wa watashi* ("I am me") is a documentary that features interviews of 50 individuals from the LGBT community in Japan. In 2018, NPO Get in touch successfully crowdfunded a project to disseminate 1000 copies of a 40 minute long version of the film on DVD to elementary, middle, and high schools across Japan for free. See: https://readyfor.jp/projects/mazekoze
43. For more information, see: https://lgbtcath.com/en/
44. Today, most old-comer immigrants, including from Korea and Taiwan, and their descendants possess the status of *tokubetsu eijūsha* ("special permanent resident") (Chapman, 2012; Matthews, 2020; National Statistics Center, 2021). While the word zainichi is used to refer to foreigners "(temporarily) staying in Japan"—for example, "*zainichi ōbeijin* (resident westerners)" (Yostumoto & Senba, 2017, p. 102)—it is used almost exclusively to refer to the immigrant Korean population (Tamura, 2003).
45. The term "inversion" arises from late nineteenth-century (western) sexological discourse. For theorists such as Krafft-Ebing (1887/1965), Freud (1992/1959), and Ellis (1915), sexual attraction was associated with one's sex role identity: masculine sex role orientation with attraction to women and feminine sex role orientation with attraction to men (Storms, 1980). Accordingly, heterosexuality was viewed as an "appropriate" expression of sex role identity and homosexuality as a sex role inversion such that, as well as being attracted to one's own sex, the individual has or desires to have characteristics of the opposite sex.
46. *Onē* is a slang term for big sister, and is used in the gay lexicon to refer to excessively feminine mannerisms and vernacular, as well as to the people who use them (Yanagisawa et al., 2016). *Tarento* (talent) is synonymous with the English terms "celebrity" or "TV personality".

Chapter 6 – Business Community Context

On the 15th of June 2018 the “LGBTI and Corporate Activities” panel talk was held at the United Nations University. During the proceedings, Fujitsu representatives announced that they had pledged their support to the UN’s Standards, the first Japanese company to do so. Building on the UN Global Compact (2000) and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2000), in 2017, the United Nations released the *Standards of Conduct for Business for Tackling Discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, and Intersex People*. It offers guidance to companies on how to meet their responsibility to respect everyone’s human rights, and acts as a benchmarking tool through the explication of the following five standards: 1. Respect human rights, including the rights of LGBTI people, at all times; 2. Eliminate discrimination of LGBTI people in recruitment, employment, benefits, and so forth 3. Provide support for LGBTI individuals in the workplace by creating an inclusive work environment; 4. Prevent other human rights violations by addressing instances of discrimination toward LGBTI people in business relationships, including suppliers and distributors, and by providing LGBTI people access to product and services in the marketplace; and 5. Act in the public sphere by consulting with local communities and organisations and advocating for change at the country-level (United Nations, 2017). Beyond meeting the minimum requirements of the UN Guiding Principles, companies have many opportunities “to contribute to positive social change more broadly in the communities where they do business” (p. 1). As such, these Standards of Conduct represent a holistic approach to corporate engagement that positions businesses within a wider community context, and impresses a responsibility to LGBTI people that goes beyond the workplace. Crucially, the aim of the Standards of Conduct is not to prescribe one course of action over another, but rather to provide possible solutions, based on existing practice and international standards, to tackling discrimination based on SOGI diversity and supporting LGBTI people as employees, as business partners, and as customers. In this chapter, the business context in Japan will be explored from a diversity management perspective. This meso-organisational level of analysis considers how SOGI diversity fits into the wider diversity management discourse and practice, and identifies the external legal and social mechanisms that are driving change. To begin, an understanding of how diversity management emerged to become a global approach to understanding and managing workplace difference, and the discourse that sustains it, will be established.

6.1 Managing workplace difference

6.1.1 Conceptualising diversity

During Study 1, when Rika and Nanami, Director of HR and D&I team leader respectively, were asked what they thought about their organisation's—Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games—diversity, Rika expressed that there was diversity of *kangaekata* ("ways of thinking") due to the fact that the committee was made up of people coming from several established companies. This, she went on to say, made it difficult to cooperate and reach consensus. Meanwhile, Nanami said this:

> I think diversity and inclusion is still under development, because I don't see much people [from] overseas working in our organisation. I can go to different floor to see foreign workers, foreign employees, but on my floor there [is] no one, there are no people from overseas working. And then, I think it's important to include those people more so that we can have more diverse ideas and opinion.

For Rika, diversity as it pertains to individual-level difference was highlighted and diversity was framed as an issue, thwarting consensus-building efforts. On the other hand, Nanami framed diversity in a more positive light, and referred to group-level difference, positioning the "foreign" employee as different from the implied default "Japanese" employee. Here the author's intent is not to imply that Rika and Nanami's statements are necessarily indicative of the wider discourse around diversity and inclusion management in Japan. Rather, it is to demonstrate that diversity can be conceptualised in different ways, in this case, as *surface-level* (demographic) and *deep-level* (attitudinal) diversity (Harrison et al., 1998). Surface-level diversity includes characteristics such as sex, age, and race/ethnicity, while deep-level diversity refers to differences among work group members' attitudes, values, and beliefs. Based on a review of business, organisation, and HR literature, Mor Barak (2016) produced a typology of diversity definitions: (a) narrow category-based definitions; (b) broad category-based definitions; and (c) definitions based on a conceptual rule (see table 6.1). According to this typology, the definition presented by DiTomaso et al. (2007) is an example of a definition based on a conceptual rule: "Workforce diversity refers to the composition of work units (work group, organization, occupation, establishment or firm) in terms of the cultural or demographic characteristics that are salient and symbolically meaningful in the relationships among group members" (p. 474). Such broad and ambiguous definitions of diversity have been criticised for obscuring issues of intergroup inequity (Linnehan & Konrad 1999). Also, as Mor Barak (2016) concludes, "when diversity is not clearly defined, individuals with different perspectives can interpret the concept in very different ways to fit their own worldviews"

Table 6.1 Typology of definitions of diversity with examples

Narrow category-based	***Broad category-based***	***Based on a conceptual rule***
Workforce diversity was defined as the percentage of Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics employed by the firm (Hartenian & Gudmundson, 2000). [Defined for the purposes of a research study. Authors note diversity is more inclusive]	In addition to race, gender, and physical disabilities, it includes human differences such as culture, lifestyle, age, religion, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, thought, and geography (Childs, 2005).	We define diversity as an aggregate team-level construct that represents differences among members of an interdependent work group with respect to a specific personal attribute (Joshi & Roh, 2009).
Diversity is conceptualised in terms of heterogeneity in professional composition—the number of different professional background represented in a group or team (Mitchell et al., 2015).	In a review of key themes in the diversity and inclusion management field, the authors focus on six dimensions of diversity: ethnicity and race, culture, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation (Theodorakopoulos & Budhwar, 2015).	Diversity is referred to as the distribution of any attribute that people use to tell themselves that another person is different (Qin et al., 2012).

Adapted from Mor Barak (2016, p. 118)

(p. 128). Defining diversity as being composed of a wide variety of attributes, as in Harrison et al. (1998), is an example of a broad category-based definition. These definitions are useful in articulating both visible and nonvisible dimensions of diversity, but by providing a long list of diversity characteristics and treating them as equal—"diluting diversity" as Linnehan and Konrad (1999) put it—such definitions can again fall into the trap of ignoring the power relations between different social groups. Finally, narrow category-based definitions are often restricted in alignment with a particular study and measure, such as in Lau and Murnighan (1998), who limit their consideration of diversity to demographic differences, focusing on age, sex, race, and job tenure. As such, narrow category-based definitions may not be entirely relevant to the realities of many workplace environments.

Born out of U.S.-based research of the 1980s and 1990s, early definitions of diversity were shaped by the civil rights movement and subsequent anti-discrimination legislation. The cultural and historical salience of social identity categories such as race, gender, and class, and the intersection of these categories within the context of the U.S. workforce, is not universally applicable. In an article titled *Can the United States export diversity?*, Bloom (2002) makes the case that while in U.S. corporations diversity is mainly about race, ethnicity, gender, religion, physical disability, age, and sexual orientation, to Europeans diversity is about national cultures and languages, with a focus on overcoming linguistic and national differences in order to forge pan-European business strategies. The way diversity has and continues to be conceptualised is also shaped by the disciplines it is propagated in. In a review of 18 articles of diversity deemed most influential (i.e., having more than 100 citations), Jonsen et al. (2011) found that 66 per cent of the authors held degrees in psychology and 62 per cent held degrees in management, rendering diversity research largely bidisciplinary. The authors wonder if researchers have become victims of epistemological groupthink, with conceptualisations of diversity becoming constrained. Fortunately, research from cultural contexts outside the U.S. and western Europe continue to expand and challenge understandings of diversity. For example, in their narrative review, Akobo and Damisah (2018) offer an African perspective of diversity, concluding that diversity dimensions in Africa are grounded in the formation of social identities and that those dominant social identities vary from country to country. To address the problems and limitations inherent in previous definitions, Mor Barak (2016) pushes for a global definition of diversity, and defines workplace diversity in the global context as:

> The division of the workforce into *distinction categories* that (a) have a *perceived commonality* within a given cultural or national context, and that (b) *impact potentially harmful or beneficial employment outcomes* such as job opportunities, treatment in the workplace, and promotion prospects—irrespective of job-related skills and qualifications (p. 129; emphasis added).

She elaborates that this definition is advantageous in that it allows for the inclusion of categories that may be relevant in some cultural contexts but not others, and that it emphasises the importance of the consequences of the distinction categories. In other words, this definition simultaneously acknowledges the cultural dependence of advantaged and disadvantaged groups within the workplace, and the unequal distribution of resources and privileges conferred on individuals in the workplace based on their perceived or actual group membership rather than on their individual characteristics. It seems that, ultimately, companies cannot take the term *diversity* for granted, and must take the proper time to assess and understand the underlying power structures that exist within the organisation. Indeed, diversity management was developed out of the need to address and engage with injustices faced by disadvantaged groups in the U.S. workforce.

6.1.2 The shape of diversity management practice

As alluded to earlier, diversity management finds its origins in the antidiscrimination movement of the United States (Ashkanasy et al., 2002; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009; Köllen, 2019), crystallised by equal employment opportunity (EEO) legislation and affirmative action (AA) initiatives. EEO refers to policies guaranteeing access to job interviews, while AA refers to a system of practices, such as hiring quotas, designed to directly increase the proportion of people from minority groups in the workplace (Jonsen, 2011). A detailed discussion of the socio-economic and political environment that precipitated EEO and AA in the U.S. is beyond the scope of this paper. However a brief overview in relation to diversity management is justified (see table 6.2; see also Kelly & Dobbin, 1998). Suffice it to say, EEO and AA measures were effective to the extent that they lead to an increase in the proportion of women and people of colour represented in companies in the United States. Concurrently, permutations of these initiatives were being rolled out in other countries such as the UK (McNamara & Basit, 2004) and Australia (Teicher & Spearitt, 1996). By the late 1980s, EEO and AA came to be viewed as interventional or transitionary in scope. Regarded as a wakeup call for companies in the United States, *Workforce 2000* (Johnson & Packer, 1987) predicted that people of colour and women would make up 85 per cent of the increase in the labour force and that, because the labour force would be increasingly dominated by disadvantaged workforce entrants with low skill levels, a skills mismatch—that is, job-skill requirements exceeding the skills of the available workforce—would ensue, stifling global competitiveness (Mincy, 1991; Mishel & Teixeira, 1991). The fact that these predictions were largely erroneous was beside the point. Edelman et al. (2001) make the case that *Workforce 2000* was the catalyst that precipitated diversity rhetoric. Citing the substantial shift in the demographic makeup of the workforce, Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, who had coined the term *managing diversity* (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998), proclaimed in the Harvard Business Review:

> Affirmative action had an essential role to play and played it very well. In many companies and communities it still plays that role. But affirmative action is an artificial, transitional intervention intended to give managers a chance to correct an imbalance, an injustice, a mistake. Once the numbers mistake has been corrected, I don't think affirmative action alone can cope with the remaining long-term task of creating a work setting geared to the upward mobility of all kinds of people, including white males (Thomas, 1990, p. 108).

Members from privileged groups—in the case of Japan, married cisgender Japanese men—maintain their positions of power and influence while members from disadvantaged groups (for example, women), although seeing an increase in numerical representation in the workplace, are

Table 6.2 Phases in the development of diversity training in the United States

Phases:	***In response to:***	***Characterised by:***
1. Precursor to Diversity: Focus on Compliance (1960s and 1970s)	Title VII of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	- Court-ordered mandate for the organization to train all employees in anti-discriminatory behaviour - Companies wanting to avoid lawsuits and negative publicity voluntarily implement training - Training focused on imparting information on the law and company policies to managers and employees
2. Focus on Assimilation (Early 1980s)	Reagan administration's deregulation policies	- Affirmative action and equal employment training scaled back as a cost-cutting effort - Organisations present content with the objective of helping women and people of colour to assimilate into existing corporate cultures
3. The Diversity Field is Born (Late 1980s)	*Workforce 2000* published by Hudson Institute	- "Workforce diversity" enters into the business lexicon - Paradigm shift from assimilation of minorities approach to managing diversity
4. A decade of Fostering Sensitivity (Late 1980s to late 1990s)	Social justice philosophy; emergence of diversity firms	- Philosophy was to make everyone more aware and sensitive to the needs and differences of others - White men primarily viewed as the problem and in need of "fixing" - Move away from affirmative action and compliance as focal point of training - Diversity viewed as an ongoing business process
5. New Millennium Paradigms for Diversity Learning (Late 1990s onward)	Changing Demographics; globalisation; fierce competition for talent	- Term "inclusion" gains popularity - Positioning diversity as a competency that all employees should be versed in - Ongoing learning; offering a variety of training courses and various types of learning modalities

Source: Adapted from Anand and Winters, 2008.

still mostly relegated to low level positions. Diversity management programmes and policies are designed to provide these disadvantaged groups with access to more lucrative jobs. For corporations, managing diversity marked a paradigm shift from viewing diversity as a legal imperative to viewing diversity as something that could add value. EEO and AA predominantly reduce the negative effects of exclusion, whereas diversity management predominantly promotes the positive effects of inclusion, paving the way for managing differences proactively rather than necessarily ensuring consistent and equal treatment of all groups (Jonsen et al., 2011).

Diversity management can be understood as a facet of human resource management (Mathews, 1998; Shen et al., 2009). Indeed, the global diffusion of diversity management shares commonalities with the global diffusion of human resource management in general (Schuler & Jackson, 2005). After spreading from the U.S. to industrialised countries in the anglosphere, diversity management arrived in mainland Europe in the early 2000s (Holvino & Kamp, 2009). The channels for diversity management were subsidiaries of American or British companies, such as Ford, BP and Shell (Egan & Bendick, 2003; Ferner, Almond, & Colling, 2005). In the years to follow, multinational corporations (MNCs), both those operating in and those originating from countries in Central and South America (Jabbour et al., 2011; Raineri, 2018), Asia (Wang & McLean, 2016; Thomson et al., 2019), and Africa (Akobo & Damisah, 2018; Ohunakin et al., 2019) have begun to implement diversity management practices. While the socio-historical and legal context of a country may influence which dimensions of diversity are given priority in companies, cross-national research reveals that the shape of diversity management practice does not diverge significantly from country to country (e.g., Klarsfeld et al., 2016). Citing (Gitzi & Köllen, 2006), Köllen (2019) lists the following seven categories of diversity management practices that find congruence across several country contexts, including Germany and Austria, France (Klarsfeld, 2009), and Brazil (Jabbour et al., 2011):

1. Work/life balance measures;
2. Employee networks around certain diversity categories;
3. The empowerment of individual members of disadvantaged groups (e.g., through mentoring or training);
4. Corporate guidelines and behaviour policies (e.g., non-discrimination policies);
5. Awareness building (e.g., training or information campaigns);
6. Reintegration after (e.g., parental) leave or sabbaticals; and
7. Sponsoring and target group marketing (e.g., for lesbians and gays, or for certain nationalities/ethnicities) (p. 6-7).

Köllen (2019) then goes on to write that although the practices may be of a similar type, certain dimensions of diversity may be emphasised over others, while others may be neglected entirely in specific diversity management programmes. Section 6.2.1 introduces the dimensions of diversity that are most salient in the Japanese business context.

On the surface, diversity management seems to be most clearly distinguished by its voluntaristic philosophy and a tendency to focus on individual differences (Agócs & Burr, 1996; Prasad & Mills, 1997; Gilbert et al., 1999; Kellough & Naff, 2004; Strachan et al., 2004). Much of diversity management has been typified by the individual as the subject of change efforts, be it through training, evaluations, or network and mentoring programs. Successful diversity management is not just a matter of picking out a generic toolkit off the shelf and handing it over to HR for quick dissemination. Traditional HR practices, characterised by an attraction-selection-attrition cycle, tend to produce and perpetuate homogeneity in the workforce (Schneider 1987; Schneider et al. 2001). Diversity management, in principle, is a comprehensive strategy intended to break this cycle by attracting, supporting, and retaining diverse talent. From a human resource management (HRM) perspective, Kossek and Lobel (1996) identified three prevailing approaches to managing diversity: diversity enlargement; diversity sensitivity; and cultural audit. Diversity enlargement refers to recruitment efforts to increase the representation of individuals from diverse backgrounds, diversity sensitivity to training programs aimed at promoting communication and understanding across different groups, and cultural audit to the generation of data through surveys to assess the company's current culture in order to pinpoint the obstacles faced by disadvantaged groups. The authors are quick to point out the limitations of these approaches. They argue that managing diversity should be viewed "as a means to achieving organisational ends, not as an end in itself" (Kossek & Lobel, 1996, p. 5), and offer an orienting framework that links company strategic choices and HR policy areas with managing diversity strategy. In a qualitative study conducted by Özbilgin and Tatli (2011), data from interviews with 66 key actors in the equality and diversity field in the UK revealed a neo-liberal turn away from regulation- and collectivism-oriented approaches towards voluntarism and individualism. In place of emotive moral case discourse centred on group-based inequalities, performance-driven business case arguments emphasising individual-level differences have taken root, engendering a site of tension in the diversity management field (Cassell & Biswas, 2000; Dick & Cassell, 2002). Scholars problematise the logical integrity of the business case (e.g., Noon, 2007), and the degree to which the discursive shift from equal opportunities to diversity management is followed by a shift in practice (Tatli, 2011).

Diversity management has been criticised for its lack of clear objectives, as well as its tendency to attempt to change the behaviour of individual employees without necessarily working to alter underlying structural inequalities. Through a Foucauldian lens, Foldy (2002) argues that "diversity programmes that downplay or ignore issues of dominance or subordination cannot succeed in making even superficial changes in organizations; they are sidestepping the elephant in the room" (p. 109). In a 30-year longitudinal review of diversity programs, Kalev et al. (2006) concluded that the strategies designed to change individuals are less effective than the conventional management solution of setting goals and assigning responsibility for moving toward these goals when addressing corporate inequity. Regarding the voluntary nature of diversity and inclusion management, as Ross and Schneider (1992) point out, legislation only sets a minimum standard, and companies are, for the most part, in control of how and to what extent they implement diversity-related programs. In their comparative analysis of how workforce diversity discourse and practice is contextualised in France, Canada, and the UK, Klarsfeld et al. (2012) found some convergence among the three countries regarding approaches to managing diversity, despite a marked difference in social, legal, and historical rationales. The authors surmised that beyond a "loose" compliance with national legislation, autonomous regulation imposed on firms by external forces such as union pressure, the "business case", social responsibility, and industry standards explained this convergence. Businesses do not operate in a bubble. They are part of a wider community; one that is becoming increasingly global. The work presented by Klarsfeld and colleagues problematises the regulation-voluntarism binary, calling for a more nuanced view of why corporations decide to adopt diversity management policies and practices.

6.1.3 Arguments for diversity management

Despite its burgeoning appeal in emerging markets (Nkomo et al., 2015) and widespread adoption by many industrialised countries (Agócs & Burr, 1996; Liff, 1997; Jones et al., 2000; Strachan et al., 2004) including Japan (Magoshi & Chang 2009; Mackie et al., 2014), understanding what exactly diversity management is and does remains elusive. Diversity management research explores the gaps between rhetoric and reality, exposing several areas of concern. In their book, *Global Diversity Management*: *An Evidence-Based Approach*, Özbilgin and Tatli (2008) communicate the challenge of defining and interpreting diversity management:

> Although diversity management can simply be defined as a management philosophy that seeks to recognise and value heterogeneity in organisations, the key difficulty has been in interpreting this definition, due to the multiplicity of vested interests by multiple stakeholder groups over the aims, processes and proposed outcomes of diversity management, as well as what constitutes legitimate, assumed and real forms of heterogeneity in organisational settings (p. 2).

Out of this ambiguity, two distinct camps have emerged: consultants and employers as proponents of diversity management, who view it as a new method for increasing organisational competitiveness and performance; and trade unions and critical management scholars as sceptics, questioning the adequacy of the concept in addressing social and workplace inequalities. For example, semi-structured interviews with 19 diversity managers in the UK revealed the business benefits of workforce diversity and the definition of difference as an individual-based phenomenon to be the two dominant elements of the diversity discourse (Tatli, 2011). Diversity management has been seen as a vehicle for managers to shift diversity rhetoric away from discrimination and inequality toward a more palatable message of harmony and productivity (Edelman et al., 2001). Further, it has been averred that, in substance, diversity management practices are simply rebranded EEO and AA practices (Kelly & Dobbin 1998). Mor Barak (2016) proffers three types of arguments in favour of diversity management (see table 6.3). The first pro-diversity management argument, and most self-evident, is that “Diversity is a reality that is here to stay”. As articulated at the opening of this paper (section 1.1.1.), as a result of the so-called second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe, 2010), the working-age population is diversifying globally. In the case of Japan, for instance, this shift is characterised by an increase in the number of women, foreigners, unmarried people, and older people represented in the workplace. Beyond recognising that the pool of current and future employees is becoming more diverse, companies must also acknowledge the ways in which diversity is represented by those employees, as well as the complex interplay between categories of diversity. As discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.3.1), the way that these social categories, or otherwise dimensions of diversity, combine and interact to generate context-driven subject positions has implications for the distribution of power, shaping individual experiences of privilege and oppression. Diversity management, then, becomes the mechanism, either as an extension of human resources or a dedicated managerial branch in

Table 6.3 Motivation for implementing diversity management

Slogan	***Argument***
“Diversity is a reality that is here to stay.”	The pool of current and future employees is becoming more diverse, and businesses have no choice but to adapt to this new reality.
“Diversity management is the right thing to do.”	Companies have an obligation to promote social justice and implement principles of compensatory justice through their policies and programs.
“Diversity management makes good business sense.”	Diversity management can give companies a competitive advantage in the global economy.

Source: Mor Barak, 2016, p. 220

and of itself, through which individuals and groups of people are categorised, considered, and served in the workplace. However, as already discussed, there is a tendency to focus diversity management efforts on historically underrepresented groups.

The second argument suggests that "Diversity management is the right thing to do". Gilbert et al. (1999) define diversity management as "a voluntary organizational program designed to create greater inclusion of all individuals into informal social networks and formal company programs" (p. 61). This definition suggests that diversity management is intended to redress organisational inequalities (see also chapter 1, section 1.1.2), defined by Acker (2006) as "systematic disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes…" (p. 443). Chapter 3 (section 3.2) explored how people who are LGBT+ continue to face both formal discrimination, with relation to benefits, hiring, promotion, and remuneration practices, as well as informal discrimination, in the form of microaggressions and harassment, in the workplace. Indeed, identifying discriminatory practices in the workplace has exemplified one strand of diversity research, with studies examining phenomena such as the glass-ceiling effect (e.g., Nkomo & Cox, 1990; Sanchez & Brock, 1996; Wirth, 2001), wage differences (e.g., Ashraf, 1996; Garnero et al., 2014), and segregation (e.g., Ibarra, 1995; Anker, 1998). Further, social responsibility discourse in relation to diversity policy is evident in organisations. For instance, Risberg and Søderberg (2008) found that, in line with previous studies conducted in Denmark, a widespread social responsibility discourse coupled with a strong focus on vulnerable groups—the long-term unemployed, disabled, young, or crime prone—typified the interpretation of diversity management in the Danish business community context. Again, it is crucial that the gap between discourse and practice is assessed. In a case study of Rabobank, a major bank in the Netherlands, it was found that, despite a discourse of social responsibility and openness to multiculturalism, ethnic employees were segregated into lower positions and not allowed to express their religion or culture (Subeliani & Tsogas, 2005). This begs the question: Where does the responsibility lie for ensuring that diversity management effects the change that it espouses?

In an article titled *Debunking corporate moral responsibility*, Velasquez (2003) asks if the corporate organisation can itself be morally responsible for its actions, or if the organisation should be viewed as nothing more than a multitude of inter-related people each of who are individually morally responsible for what the organisation does. This question has seemingly been laid to rest by business ethicists in favour of the former, so-called collectivist view. Acknowledging that although from a legal perspective, organisations are usually treated as being fully responsible for their actions, Velasquez rejects the notion of corporate moral agency. By attributing the responsibility to the individual(s) who brought about the act, the related consequences or punishments are likely to be more just (Velasquez, 2003). Applying a Schopenhauerian perspective, Köllen (2016b) extends this argument, asserting that only when implemented or supported by individuals who are exclusively motivated by compassion do diversity management initiatives have genuine moral worth. Here, compassion is understood to mean “suffering with another” (Cartwright, 1988, p. 557). Compassion may be reserved for others that have suffered in the same way that the individual has suffered—e.g., a gay man identifying with the discrimination faced by other gay men—which in turn may shape the approach they have to managing diversity and the policies they promote. However, as Glastra et al. (2000) put it, “organisations do not have a natural or inherent stake in a more just distribution of labour” (p. 714). Companies, or more specifically, certain key individuals with companies, may only be compassionate to the extent that their actions are seen as morally “good” in the eyes of various stakeholders. A more cynical view would hold that diversity management is the “right thing to do”, in so far as it serves to bolster the reputation of the company, appealing to consumers and potential employees.

As for the third type of argument, “Diversity management makes good business sense”, an ideology that only companies who could manage and support diverse cultures would have the ability to retain talent and remain competitive became commonplace in the 1990s (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014), at least in the United States. The so-called “business case” for diversity is an appeal to rationality, based on the assumption that diversity initiatives add value to the corporate bottom line (Labucay, 2015). This line of rhetoric was intended to convince executives and managers that effective diversity management is imperative, not only because of the increasingly diverse labour and product markets, but also because a more diverse workforce produces better business results (Kochan et al., 2003). As for the second point, a mismatch between the rhetoric and research results appeared. Claims of unidirectional causal relationships between workforce or cultural diversity and improved business performance have often been unsubstantiated (Özbilgin, 2008). In a systematic review of the strategic human resource management literature, Alcázar et al. (2013) concluded that the effects of diversity were considered as direct causal relationships, without exploring potential mediating and moderating factors, which they refer to as a “black box” analysis approach. With reference to the surveys and qualitative data representing the experiences of companies in the European business context that seemed to cement the positive impact of diversity management on business results, Fischer (2007) observed that the people filling out surveys and giving interviews may be biased, and that there will be a strong interest of representatives to provide a positive image of the company. At the organisational- and team-level of analysis, diversity does not necessarily lead to improved performance, as multiple meta-analyses have shown (Bowers, et al., 2000; Webber & Donahue, 2001; Dos Reis et al., 2007; Stahl et al., 2010). Business consultants such as Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas argued that valuing diversity would lead to competitive advantage, despite the lack of "actual data supporting the linkage of managing diversity and organizational competitiveness" (Cox & Blake, 1991, 45). Finally, a report by the European commission (2005) found an overall lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the progress and benefits of diversity. Far from a resounding affirmation that diversity management is good for business, a pattern of mixed results has emerged. And yet, the business case for diversity has continued to endure.

More recently, the business case has been mobilised by non-profit organisations, including UK-based LGBT organisation Stonewall. Evidently, engaging with the business case discourse allows LGBT organisations to connect with companies using language they understand and find palatable (Rumens, 2015). Indeed, in the current research, it was found that organisations that are pushing for marriage equality in Japan deployed business case rhetoric. For example, in the *Viewpoint on Marriage Equality* by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, language of social responsibility is enveloped by promises of economic growth:

> Not only would legalizing marriage equality be economically good for business in Japan, the ACCJ considers it a matter of corporate social responsibility to support policies that contribute to sustaining an effective social infrastructure and promoting diversity…now is the time for change in this respect for the government itself to catch up with Japan's society and private sector as a responsible member of the international community, above and beyond the immediate economic benefits from talent acquisition and retention that we anticipate would emerge from such a move (2018, p. 3).

Similar rhetoric was employed in the #EqualityActJapan campaign that was described in chapter 5 (section 5.2.2). A corporate LGBT equality support letter was submitted to the government, with the first key point being that "LGBT rights are good for business", framing the lack of LGBT rights as an economic loss with the potential to adversely effect on GDP. Rumens (2015) argues that LGBT people are discursively constituted as potentially viable sexual and gendered workers in organisational and economic terms, but nothing is published about the uneven consequences of the discourses that constitute LGBT workers as such. In other words, the business case attempts to attach quantifiable worth to various social identity groups, categorising individuals insofar as they can "add (monetary) value" to the organisation (and to the country in the case of the #EqualityActJapan campaign). Meanwhile, Konrad (2003) articulates three points that reveal how the business case fails to disrupt normative systems of power: (1) it ignores the destructive impact of stereotyping, prejudice, and institutional and interpersonal discrimination that arises from bringing issues of dealing with difference to the surface; (2) it threatens to ghettoize members of historically excluded groups, limiting them to positions where they represent the company to their own communities (Ely & Thomas, 2001); and (3) it frames diversity as a tool to outperform traditionally homogeneous companies, the implication being that diversifying the workforce is only necessary in companies where innovation and growth are prioritised.

Another line of thought sees the business case argument and the social justice rationale as being not only compatible with each other but also interdependent: “Contemporary organisations argue that there is clearly a business-case argument in developing diversity strategies and that there is a social and a moral argument to do so” (Robinson, 2007, p. 366; see also Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010). Köllen (2019) makes the point that the business case and moral perspective of diversity management are by no means mutually exclusive, and that in reality companies can act in a way that is simultaneously “good” *and* profitable. The aforementioned Risberg and Søderberg (2008) study, for instance, found that the two front-runner companies, TDC and Novo Nordisk, intertwined the social responsibility discourse with a business case discourse. Cox (1994) states that “a major motive for investing in managing-diversity initiatives is that it is morally and ethically the right thing to do” (p. 10), and then goes on to say that, in the long term, economic performance goals are enhanced by social responsibility goals. Reflecting on the above, it can be said that, while the first argument, that diversity is here to stay, has the most empirical support, at this point it is redundant; stating the obvious. The business case argument lacks a solid foundation yet can be operationalised as a course to meet tangible targets. Metrics like quotas are easy goals to target and something tangible to show stakeholders. However, inclusion has to go beyond hiring more people from historically underrepresented groups or promoting those people into positions of power out of obligation to the bottom line. The moral case argument, although it reveals and is the most critical of systems of inequality, can be vague and obscure. Even when it is called upon, it’s usually wrapped up with the business case, or otherwise masked by it completely. Yet, the moral case argument has the greatest potential to spark meaningful change, if only individuals act from a place of compassion. Rather than hoping for a “dual agenda” where diversity can lead to both business and social justice outcomes, Rhodes (2017) advocates for an “ethical praxis” approach, which recognises that, while the business case for diversity is justified on the grounds of organisational self-interest, it can and has been used to create real possibilities for justice in organisations. By acknowledging that non-ethically motivated gains can maintain their origins in a politics of ethics, the above ACCJ and #EqualityActJapan examples can be evaluated in a more nuanced way. The “diversity management” approach has become a staple of not just profit-oriented companies, but also of trade unions, public authorities (including territorial authorities), associations, and so forth, across the world (Rice, 2010; Stringfellow, 2012; Klarsfeld et al., 2016). While it is clear that diversity management is here to stay, what remains unclear is its actual effectiveness and utility. Köllen (2019) discusses the ambiguities and dissent of diversity management in terms of its dimensionality and legitimacy, and along with Dennissen et al. (2020), calls for an intersectional approach to viewing diversity in research and practice, something that is addressed in the current paper.

6.2 Scope of diversity management practice in Japan

In order to better understand the diversity management initiatives and policies companies in Japan have implemented, in particular those related to SOGI diversity, in 2019, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) launched the “Workplace Diversity Promotion Project”. A committee, consisting of Kamano Saori, Gunji Masato, Satō Masato (chairperson), Shimada Hiroko, and Higashi Yuki, was formed to carry out the project, including planning, conducting and reporting on the surveys, and collecting case studies. Moreover, interviews were conducted with trade unions and LGBT-related organisations, including RENGO and gid.jp, as well as with companies. Two surveys were carried out. The first targeted companies (*kigyō*). Excluding agriculture, forestry and fisheries, as well as public services, the working group randomly sampled 10,000 companies with over 50 full-time employees across 16 industries. The valid response rate was 23.9 per cent, resulting in responses from 288 companies with 1000 or more employees (hereinafter “large companies”), 821 companies with between 100 and 999 employees (“medium-sized companies”), and 1274 companies with 99 or fewer employees (“small companies”). A majority (18.6%) of the companies were located in Tokyo Metropolis, including 41.3 per cent of the large companies. The second survey targeted employees (*rōdōsha*). Specifically, individuals aged 20 to 69 who were engaged as *seishain* (“regular employees”) in industries other than “government agency/public service” and “agriculture, forestry and fisheries” were sampled. A total of 4,884 responses were recorded, representing the following spread: “cis-het person (close with someone who is a sexual minority)” = 1333; “cis-het person (not close with someone who is a sexual minority)” = 1441; “cis lesbian” = 419; “cis gay” = 464; “cis bi” = 463; “trans” = 301; “other *tōjisha*” = 463. The majority of respondents indicated that they lived in Tokyo Metropolis, followed by Osaka, Kanagawa, Aichi, and Chiba Prefectures. In the sections to follow, the findings of this project (MHLW, 2020), in particular those related to the company survey and the employee survey, will be drawn upon extensively.

6.2.1 Definition and dimensions of diversity

In 2002, then chairman of *Keidanren* (Japan Business Federation) Okuda Hiroshi, recognising the protracted economic downturn Japan was facing, spoke about the importance of valuing and respecting individual differences:

> Because of that, by March of next year Japan Business Federation intends to issue a vision for the renaissance of Japan, and it will include a concrete outlook for the future shape of the country and recommendations pertaining to the institutional reforms necessary to translate that vision into reality. The philosophy that underlies that vision can be succinctly defined this way: "Attaining dynamism through diversity." "Attaining dynamism through diversity." The effort will entail altering our uniform lifestyle and the consensus approach exemplified by the collective orientation that has underpinned the pursuit of material affluence in the postwar era; instead, *we must create a society that attaches paramount importance to the diverse values and individuality of each and every person, a society in which individual differences are mutually respected*. If individuals and companies set diversified goals and then create the energy needed to engage freely in the activities required to achieve those goals, I feel certain we will be able to structure a new economy and society in Japan (Keidanren, 2002; emphasis added).

Okuda's speech encapsulates elements from all three of the pro-diversity management arguments (see table 6.3), balancing a tone of urgency with one of optimism, while also remaining cognisant of the realities of the economy and the changing demography of Japan. This speech can also be seen as the official entry-point of diversity management in Japan, with the Keidanren, a powerful economic organisation, playing a prominent role in its diffusion, as well as in shaping policy.[1] In terms of definition, a report by the *Nikkeiren Diversity Work Rule Institute* (2002) described "*daibāshiti manejimento* (diversity management)" as "a strategy that leverages diverse human resources. Without being constrained by conventional corporate and social standards, it is a strategy that incorporates diverse attributes (gender, age, nationality, etc.) as well as diverse values and ways of thinking to respond to changes in the business environment quickly and flexibly and to link corporate growth with individual happiness" (p. 5). McDonald (2009) notes how this definition locates dimensions of diversity at both the surface-level (i.e, the "attributes") and the deep-level (i.e., the "values" and "ways of thinking"), as in the typology presented by Harrison and colleagues (1998). This definition is also reflected in corporate diversity statements

Table 6.4 Examples of diversity statements found on Japanese company websites

Company	*Diversity Statement*
Dai-ichi Life Holdings	We believe that *leveraging diversity* and *realizing employees' fullest potential* will lead to our sustainable growth (URL: https://www.dai-ichi-life-hd.com/en/sustainability/initiatives/diversity.html).
Hitachi	We regard gender, race, nationality, religion, career background, age, personality, values, sexuality (LGBT), and all other external and internal differences as part of a person's individuality. To ensure that each and every employee can make the most of his or her own abilities, we are actively striving to *foster a culture of respect* as well as *enhance mechanisms within the Group* (URL: https://www.hitachi-hightech.com/global/about/csr/social/labor_practices/diversity_management/).
Nintendo	At Nintendo, we *respect human rights* and hire talent, regardless of sex, age, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. We practice fair treatment and evaluation of employees based on the skills they demonstrate, supporting them to perform to the best of their ability. As our consumers' interests and preferences continue to diversify in the world of entertainment, *leveraging a diverse workforce* is crucial for raising the collective strength of the company (URL: https://www.nintendo.co.jp/csr/en/report/employees/topics/index.html?active-topics=topics01).
Panasonic	To *exploit the knowledge capital of society* to the greatest extent possible, Panasonic believes that it is crucial to *take advantage of all forms of diversity* in the workplace, whether in terms of gender, age, nationality, or any other cohort (URL: https://www.panasonic.com/global/corporate/sustainability/employee/diversity.html).
Softbank	SoftBank Corp. strives to create opportunities and build an environment in which all employees, regardless of age, gender, nationality or disability, can demonstrate their individuality and capabilities. Promotions are given based on fair evaluation of responsibilities, performance and capabilities (URL: https://www.softbank.jp/en/corp/philosophy/human-resource/diversity/)
Sony	*Respecting different opinions* that arise from diverse values and taking on the challenge of creating new value are part of Sony's DNA and the source of our innovation. We will strengthen activities related to diversity and promote fostering a corporate culture in which *employees with diverse backgrounds* can *fully utilize their abilities* (URL: https://www.sony.net/corporate/sustainability/).

(see Table 6.4). As can be seen, most of the diversity statements either mention or explicitly list a number of different surface-level and deep-level social identity categories. In their cross-national comparison of 75 major companies in five countries (France, Germany, Spain, the UK and the United States), Jonsen and colleagues' (2021) analysis of diversity statements revealed that 84 per cent of companies presented a list of diversity dimensions. In particular, McDonald (2009) concludes that diversity managers in Japan work within a scope of diversity that “extends beyond the traditional notions of difference to elements that are less visible” (p. 6). Moreover, these diversity statements place a strong emphasis on “leveraging diversity” by realising the full potential of individuals in order for the company to “grow”, “innovate”, or “diversify”, clearly articulating the business case rhetoric (see section 6.1.3). There is also some social justice rhetoric, with companies like Nintendo and Softbank expressing “respect [for] human rights” and “fair evaluation” of employees. Similarly, in their analysis of online diversity statements from 174 top European companies, Singh and Point (2009) concluded that diversity statements present two different types of legitimacy: pragmatic (i.e., self-serving; primarily benefitting the company but also benefitting the employee) and moral (i.e., doing the “right thing”; transparency, fairness, and equity in procedures). Meanwhile, in the analysis conducted by Jonsen et al. (2021), 20 per cent of the diversity statements made direct references to fairness.

Following Mor Barak’s (2016) global definition of diversity (see section 6.2.1) it can be understood that managing diversity is culturally dependant, with each country or region having its own salient divisions of difference. As discussed in section 6.1.2, a country’s “brand” of diversity management is also shaped by the legal context. In chapter 2, section 2.3.1, it was established that the “dominant group” in society is the Japanese heterosexual man who is older and married. This extends to the workplace. As Yanagisawa and colleagues put it: “The unspoken rule of how to succeed in a Japanese company is to ‘be a married male employee with a family’” (p. 132).Unlike the United States, for instance, which had placed a strong emphasis on race-based EEOs and AA, with much of the original diversity rhetoric and activism stemming from people of colour, in particular black people, Japan has not seen a politics of colour. This is not to say that systemic racism and social inequity based on ethnicity does not exist in Japan; far from it. It is more so that the framing of difference sees “Japanese citizen” as separate from “foreign population” (see chapter 2 section 2.2.3; see also chapter 5, section 5.3.4). In the case of Japan, research, including the current inquiry, sees “gender” as the most important dimension of diversity, with scholars such as Mackie and colleagues (2014) arguing that since the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was enacted in 1985 in Japan, the promotion of women in the workforce has remained a focal point of company diversity initiatives. Meanwhile, in their comparative study of 209 organisations Japan and Germany, Kemper et al. (2016) found that while companies in Germany adopted a broader approach to diversity management, companies in Japan focused primarily on gender. Looking at the historical focus of EEOs and AA in Japan, it can be seen that efforts have been made to support the employment of women and people with disabilities. In a policy proposal,

Figure 6.1 Fujitsu's "Inclusion Wheel"

Source: Fujitsu Group, 2021.

Keidanren (2017a) explicitly mentions "women", "youth and elderly", "LGBT", "foreigner", and "people with disabilities" in its definition of diversity. The Workplace Diversity Promotion Project (MHLW, 2020) also gives important clues as to which diversity "*zokusei* (attributes)" are salient in the workplace. As well as asking the respondents how they felt about working with "*kōreisha* (the elderly), "*gaikokujin* (foreigners)", "*shōgai o motta hito* (people living with disabilities)", and "*seiteki mainoriti* (sexual minorities)", the employee survey asked if the respondents felt that the workplace atmosphere was one in which the active participation of women was supported. These same categories are more or less reflected in Fujitsu's "Inclusion Wheel" (see figure 6.1). The inner ring is comprised of the five so-called "focus area" dimensions of diversity: gender; health and disability; ethnicity and race; sexual orientation and gender identity; and age. Starting with "gender", the initiatives the company has taken with regards to each of the focus area dimensions are outlined in the *Fujitsu Group sustainability data book 2021*. The promotion of women was aligned with KPIs or reaching a quota represented as a percentage of the total workplace or otherwise as a percentage of total managerial positions. Specific initiatives to hire and to create inclusive spaces for people living with disabilities and LGBT people were also reported. These broad category-based definitions of diversity are, as discussed in section 6.1.1, prone to ignoring power relations between groups as all categories of difference are seemingly treated as equally important to manage. In sum, from a legal perspective, "gender" and "ability" have become important dimensions of diversity in the workplace. Considering the shifting workforce demographic, characterised by an increase in foreign workers and nationals (see chapter 1, section 1.1.1) and a super-aged society (see chapter 2, section 2.2.1), implementing diversity policies that target "age" and "nationality" makes sense from a demographic perspective. Finally, lacking a strong legal or demographic rationale, that "SOGI" diversity is included as a salient dimension of diversity arguably signals that in Japan sufficient momentum in the LGBT+ movement, with regards to visibility, rights and social trends, has been achieved.

6.2.2 Compliance and harassment prevention

In 2017, Keidanren released the policy proposal *Toward the realisation of Diverse and Inclusive Society*, which specifically focused on LGBT+ workplace issues and provided examples of concrete actions companies had already taken to create more inclusive work environments for people who are LGBT+.[2] These included: implementing anti-harassment policies; extending the scope of healthcare and benefits to include same-sex partners; holding company-wide educational seminars; establishing a *sōdan madoguchi* ("consultation desk") for LGBT employees; creating more inclusive physical workspaces, such as through the installation of gender-neutral toilets; having a non-discrimination policy in the hiring of people who are LGBT; extending the scope of services such as insurance and mobile "family plans" to same-sex partners; and holding company-wide LGBT events in cooperation with NPOs, and so forth. These actions can be seen as targeting three main areas: 1. Education; 2. Non-discrimination policies; and 3. Workplace environment. In an accompanying survey of member companies conducted by Keidanren (2017a), it was found that 76.4 per cent of companies had implemented or were in the process of implementing LGBT-related initiatives (n = 232). Of the companies that had taken action, 75.3 per cent had implemented anti-harassment policies, 69.1 per cent had held seminars, and 62.4 per cent had established a consultation desk (n = 177). Overall, the focus seems to be on developing an understanding about "LGBT" at an individual level, rather than developing an understanding of inequality and privilege at a structural level. In other words, it is the responsibility of managers and coworkers, as well as HR systems, to be more accommodating of people who are LGBT+. Moreover, initiatives related to harassment prevention measures seem to be in response to changes in the wider legal environment.

In the business context, compliance—translated into Japanese as *hōrei junshu* (also *konpuraiansu*)—refers to conducting business activities in a manner that is in accordance with laws and regulations (Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). The concept of compliance is not necessarily consistent across businesses, with some companies clearly stating that social norms are included in laws and regulations, as well as including philanthropic activities within the scope of their business activities. In terms of compliance with relation to workplace dimensions of diversity, the

Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (see chapter 5, section 5.3.5) requires that businesses formulate an action plan and set numerical targets and initiatives for promoting the active participation of women. For example, Fujitsu Group sustainability data book 2021 shows that in 2020 the female manager rate was 7.4 per cent. It is indicated that these percentages were confirmed by a third-party. With regards to people with disabilities, established in 1960, the *shōgaisha no koyō no sokushin nado ni kansuru hōritsu* (Act on Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities) introduced a "quota system", in which employers to are obligated to employ a certain percentage of persons with disabilities. The rate has been steadily increasing over the years, and as of 2021, it stood at 2.3 percent in the case of private enterprise; in other words, one in about every 50 people employed should be a person living with disability (Inose, 2020; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2021a).[3] For example, SoftBank (n.d.) indicated that, as of June 2020, the hiring rate of employees with special needs was 2.39% of all employees working in Japan and overseas. Further, Softbank specified that people with disabilities and non-disabled persons are assessed based on the same criteria and receive the same opportunities for scope of work and promotion.

In Japan, although there are no labour laws that explicitly ban discrimination based on sexual identity or gender identity, there is nonetheless some legislation that is pertinent to LGBT employees. Chiefly, Article 4 of the Special Act of GID (see chapter 5, section 5.2.2), which was promulgated in 2003, relates to the *toriatsukai* ("treatment") of people diagnosed with GID: "Unless otherwise provided for by law, with regard to the application of the Civil Code (Act No. 89 of 1896) and other laws and regulations, a person who has received a ruling of a change in recognition of gender status is deemed to have been assigned to the Opposite Gender". This has been interpreted to mean that businesses must treat people as the gender stipulated on their *koseki*, with relation to using change rooms and toilets, for instance, as well as take appropriate action when dealing with the response of other employees in relation to the gender change (Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). More recently, in June of 2020, the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace, along with the *rōdō shisaku sōgō suishin hō* (Labour Measures Comprehensive Promotion Act) were amended, making it mandatory for companies to strengthen their sexual harassment and maternity harassment prevention measures, and to include power harassment prevention measures, respectively; from April 2022 these mandates would also apply to SMEs (Teshima, 2021). Under the guidelines for sexual harassment prevention, speech and conduct that reflect a "gender-based division of labour mindset", as well as the use of words like "*homo*" or "*lezu*"—seen as derogatory slurs toward gay men and lesbians respectively—were included as grounds for sexual harassment. Meanwhile, the power harassment prevention measures explicitly mentions the outing of someone who is LGBT as a grounds for power harassment. In other words, companies are, understandably, prioritising compliance with the law. However, as pointed out in the “Business Support for LGBT Equality in Japan” (Human Rights Watch, 2021), a declaration of support that was submitted to the government as part of the #EqualityActJapan campaign (see chapter 5, section 5.2.2), these laws only mandate the prevention of “harassment” and are not inclusive laws protecting individuals from discrimination based on SOGI diversity. The declaration then goes on to cite the 2020 survey conducted by the OECD (2020a), in which “Japan ranks second from the worst” in terms of LGBT inclusive legislation.

In chapter 5 (section 5.2.1), the RENGO (2016) and NijiVoice (Kimura et al., 2021) surveys, as well as the “List of LGBT hardships” (J-ALL, 2019a) described the scope and types of harassment queer people in Japan face in the workplace. Similarly, findings in the Workplace Diversity Promotion Project (MHLW, 2020) employer survey indicated the following: people who were categorised as lesbian were most likely to experience harassment with relation to physical or outward appearance; people who categorised as gay or bi were most likely to experience harassment with relation to inquiries about having a romantic partner or otherwise about marriage plans; and people who were categorised as trans were most likely to experience harassment with relation to expectations around masculinity and femininity or otherwise based on physical or outward appearance. These results reflect wider societal expectations around marriage and conforming to the gender binary. Moreover, when asked what they envisioned as a *hataraki yasui shokuba* (“comfortable work environment”), the LGB respondents’ (n = 574) top three most selected answers were as follows (multiple answers allowed): “A workplace in which people are not treated unfavourably on the basis of ‘sexual minority’ with regards to evaluation, job rotation, transfer, and so forth” (60.5%); “A workplace free from harassment such as sexual harassment and power harassment” (52.6%); and “A workplace in which no one propagates offensive words and actions toward ‘sexual minorities’” (52.1%). As for the trans respondents (n = 101), the top two answers were the same as the LGB respondents—56.4 per cent and 49.5 per cent, respectively—while the third most often selected was: “A workplace in which you can demonstrate your abilities regardless of gender” (46.5%). Regarding “offensive words”, many indigenious Japanese words such as *okama*, as well as hybridised terms of the 20th century such as *nyūhāfu* (see section 5.1.2) have taken on derogatory nuance, while so-called globalised sexual categories (see Altman, 2001) have become *seijiteki ni tadashii* (politically correct), just as with

Table 6.5 Checking language use

Words that should be used with caution	Examples of substitutions
Homo	*Gei*
Rezu	*Rezubian*
Ryōtōtsukai	*Baisekushuaru*
Nyūhāfu	*Toranzujendā, etc.*
Okama, onabe, onē	Should not be used
Kareshi/kanojo	*Pātonā, koibito, oaite*
Dannasan/okusan	*Pātonā, haigūsha*
Otōsan/okāsan	*Goryōshin, gokazoku, hogosha*
Obocchan/Ojōsan	*Okosan, kodomo*

Source: Teshima et al., 2021, p. 38

the usage of "LGBT" (Yanagisawa et al. 2016). *LGBT to rōmu* (Teshima et al., 2021), a book that implies a practitioner readership, prescribes proper language use in relation to LGBT+ subjectivities (see table 6.4).

Looking at the table, it can be understood that in the first four rows, the "correct" ways to refer to people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, respectively, are shown. Then, it is indicated that the words *okama*, *onabe*, and *onē* should not be used. The final four groups of words offer substitutions for gender binary expressions when talking about relationships between other people: "partner" instead of "boyfriend/girlfriend"; "spouse" instead of "husband/wife"; "parents" or "guardians" instead of "father/mother", and; "child" instead of "boy/girl". This gender-neutral language has become important for removing assumptions about a person's sexuality and/or gender identity, as well as minimising the possibility of misgendering someone; discussed further chapter 10 (section 10.3.4). As pointed out in the *Guidelines for reporting on LGBTQ* (J-ALL, 2022), it is important to understand that there may be LGBT+ *tōjisha* who use words now deemed politically incorrect to refer to themselves. Finally, compliance may be shaped by precedent set in legal proceedings. The Fuchu Youth House trail of 1991 was pivotal in establishing the discourse that the rights of LGBT+ people are equal to the rights non-LGBT+ people (see chapter 5, section 5.1.2). Meanwhile, the 2002 "Company S dismissal case" represents the earliest legal case in Japan regarding LGBT+ issues in the workplace. In this lawsuit, an employee diagnosed with gender identity disorder—legally designated as "male" on their *koseki*—violated company regulations (*fukumu meirei*) by taking on the appearance of a woman for about one month, which resulted in a disciplinary dismissal (Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). The court ruled that it was an excessive use of disciplinary power and rendered the dismissal invalid. This case and others like it (see, for example, Teshima et al., 2021) set expectations around the limits of acceptability with regards to LGBT+ discrimination, and show that businesses can be held accountable for their actions in the court of law. Ultimately, in their present form, the labour laws are not robust enough or inclusive enough to help LGBT+ people realise a comfortable work environment. The point of diversity management, then, is to go beyond what is legally mandated and voluntarily support marginalised groups. Of course, this support can also be shaped by external forces.

6.2.3 CSR and the sustainable development goals

In 2016, NPO work with Pride launched the *PRIDE Index*, intended as a benchmarking tool for corporate practices, policies and efforts to create an LGBT-inclusive workplace.[4] It was developed over a period of six months by a voluntary working group consisting of 24 companies and groups (Japan For Sustainability, 2016). The PRIDE Index consists of five metrics, each with their own evaluation items, such as “The policy includes the term gender identity” (Policy), and “Same-sex partners can be designated as beneficiaries of company-specific survivor pensions and group life insurance” (Development). These metrics, along with the number of items required to satisfy each metric, are as follows:

- **Policy**: Action Declaration – Has your company implemented a formal policy with regards to sexual minorities including LGBT, and is such policy widely disclosed internally and externally (via the internet, etc.)? [4 or more out of 8 items must be checked].
- **Representation**: LGBTA network – Does your company provide all employees, whether LGBT or allies, with a forum to express ideas to the company or exchange opinions with each other regarding sexual minority matters? In addition, does your company make an effort to increase the number of allies and make their support visible? [2 or more out of 4 items must be checked]
- **Inspiration**: Raising Awareness – Over the past three years, has your company made any efforts to promote sexual minority awareness, such as providing training or media tools for awareness, sending out messages within the company via the intranet or setting a pride week/month, etc.? [4 or more items must be checked for items 1 through 9; 2 or more items must be checked for items 10 through 14]
- **Development**: Human Resources Management Policy and Programs – If your company has the below human resources management policies and programs, do they apply to

employees who are married to, or have a partnership with, a same-sex partner as well as his/her families? [2 or more items must be checked for items 1 through 5; 3 or more items must be checked for items 6 through 12, as well as for 13 through 18]

- **Engagement/Empowerment**: Social Responsibility and External Activities – Has your company conducted any CSR activities/programs or external activities to assimilate social awareness towards sexual minorities within the past year? [2 or more out of the 5 items must be checked]

Companies can voluntarily apply to the program, and receive awards based on their progress: “Gold” for satisfying all 5 metrics; “Silver” for satisfying 4; and “Bronze” for 3. There are also awards for best practice, and a “Rainbow Recognition” award for companies that have shown commitment to LGBT diversity and inclusion beyond the PRIDE Index (work with Pride, 2021). As of 2021, over 500 companies had received awards. These awards can be displayed on company websites, and, as per signaling theory (chapter 3 (section 3.3.1), may signal to prospective employees that a company is LGBT-friendly. For example, the Gold Award is displayed on the Toyota website with a description in both Japanese and English that outlines the initiatives they have taken, which include recognising same-sex and de facto marriage, and establishing a company-wide ally support network (Toyota, n.d). With diversity standards set in public consciousness, applicants are becoming increasingly discerning in the companies they chose to work for. For example, a Canadian-based survey of 113 MBA job seekers by Ng and Burke (2005) concluded that women and ethnic minorities found diversity management to be important when accepting offers of employment, and that “high achievers” (i.e., students with high GPA scores, etc.) and new immigrants rated organisations with diversity management as more attractive as potential employers. Responding to the expectations of society is one aspect of corporate social responsibility.

Simply put, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an ethical management approach in which companies take into consideration the environment, the economy, and society with respect to business activities (Yanagisawa et al., 2016). In a survey of 167 businesses, including 54 from the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship,[5] “Contributing to solving social issues through business” was most frequently chosen by respondents with regards to their impression of CSR purpose and initiatives, while “Realising the corporate philosophy, founding spirit, etc.” was determined the most applicable (Keidanren, 2017b). The term itself seems to imply that corporations are fully fledged moral agents (Klonoski ,1991). Indeed, in the Keidanren (2017b) CSR survey, it was found that most (89%) of the companies relied on their own code of ethics to set standards and norms around CSR activities. With regards to the scope of activities in Japan, the survey found that most companies were covering several areas with no particular bias: “consideration for the environment” and “contributing to society, including regional contributions” (through philanthropic activities, for instance), were the most often selected by respondents, with “respect for human rights” also featuring prominently. Importantly, 46 per cent of respondents indicated that their company went above and beyond legal compliance with regards to respect for human rights. In this way, CSR has been linked to diversity management (e.g. Mazur, 2013; Tatli et al. 2014; Köllen, 2016b), with many companies presenting their diversity management programmes as part of their commitment to CSR. Most of the companies listed in table 6.4 displayed information related to diversity management either under a “CSR” or “sustainability” tab on their websites—“sustainability” being the second most used term to describe corporate social responsibility, according to the Keidanren (2017b) CSR survey. Similarly, in their study, Jonsen et al. (2021) found that the biggest share of diversity statements was located under corporate social responsibility or corporate value sections for 28 companies (37.3% of the sample). In Japan, the concept of *kigyō no shakaiteki sekinin* (corporate social responsibility), is not necessarily new. For example, De Zoysa and Takaoka (2020) note that while CSR became a buzz word during the early 2000s, Keidanren had been promoting CSR practices as early as the 1970s, and in 1991, it established the first explicit CSR guide, the Charter of Corporate Behavior, for Japanese firms (see Keidanren, 2010). Moreover, they argue that CSR is a natural fit for Japan’s business environment, which is typified by firms that adroitly balance major business activities whilst simultaneously taking into consideration the interests of a broad group of stakeholders. However, CSR is not practiced evenly across Japan. In their study of SMEs in regional Japan, De Zoysa and Takaoka (2020) found that CSR performance was significantly lower in SMEs relative to large firms, as well as significantly lower in regional firms compared to their metropolitan counterparts. They write that, despite a desire to integrate CSR in their business operations, respondents expressed uncertainty in regards to what actions and initiatives to implement. They cite the *ISO26000: 2010 – Guidance on social responsibility*, which was published by the International Organization for Standardisation in 2010, as an important resource for both SMEs and large firms in Japan. A similar trend can be seen with regards to participation in the PRIDE index. It is indicated that 83 per cent of participating businesses were *daikigyō* (large companies), while there has never been more than a 21 per cent participation rate by *chūshōkigyō* (SMEs) since the index launched in 2016. Importantly, CSR goes beyond any single business entity.

As a self-regulation mechanism, CSR tries to minimize the need for strict legal provisions against discrimination at the workplace. Indeed, it is made clear in the UN Guiding Principles (2000) that "corporate responsibility to respect human rights exists independently of the willingness or capacity of States to meet their own human rights obligations … [and that] actions that need to be taken by States and businesses are distinct but complementary" (United Nations, 2017, p. 18). Frameworks have been developed that allow businesses to measure and track their human rights commitments. For example, with regards to the treatment of people who are LGBT in the business context, introduced in chapter 3 (section 3.2.1), the Corporate Equality Index (CEI) has been published annually since 2002. With a possible top score of 100, participating companies answer a survey that is used to rate their level of commitment to establishing and implementing comprehensive policies, benefits, and practices that ensure greater equity for LGBT+ workers and their families. The scoring criteria are as follows:

1. Workforce Protections (30 points possible);
2. Inclusive Benefits (30 points possible);
3. Supporting an Inclusive Culture & Corporate Social Responsibility (40 points possible); and
4. Responsible citizenship (-25).

Regarding the last criterion, it is indicated that the Human Rights Campaign [HRC] foundation will cross-check the submitted survey score with public records, and that "Employers will have 25 points deducted from their score for a large-scale official or public anti-LGBTQ+ blemish on their recent records" (HRC, 2022, n.p.). In the 20 years since the index's inception, the inclusion of trans people in particular has seen significant progress, with 97 per cent of CEI businesses offering explicit gender identity non-discrimination protections (up from 5% in 2002), and 86 percent of CEI businesses offering transgender-inclusive health insurance coverage—a 22-fold increase since 2009. The PRIDE index can be seen as Japan's answer to the CEI, a key difference being that as yet, there are no negative scoring criteria, meaning that participant companies in Japan are not held to the same level of scrutiny as they are in the United States. Of course, the criteria in benchmarking tools such as these are not unchangeable. In the 2022 CIE report, it was announced that new criteria would be included and an adjustment to existing criteria would be made to coincide with the 2023 submission schedule: "While we believe that our previous criteria set an ideal benchmark in the past, the current and continuing issues seen within the LGBTQ+ community required us to evolve our criteria to meet the ever-changing needs of the community's members and their families" (HRC Foundation, 2022, n.p.). A seemingly positive cycle is put in motion, whereby companies follow the lead of frontrunners that exhibit best practices for CSR and diversity management. Thus, a form of self-regulation develops within certain industries or the business community at large.

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), representing 169 targets (United Nations, 2022). The targets include specific metrics (e.g., proportion of population) and time frames (e.g., by 2030), and they are amended over time. The Sustainable Development Goals are a collective effort of 193 countries, with the United Nations tracking the progress by compiling and aggregating national data by region. In Japan, the SDGs became official national policy in 2016 with the establishment of the "SDGs Promotion Headquarters", and in 2017 they were incorporated into Keidanren's "Charter of Corporate Behavior" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020a; Hasegawa, 2022). A 2020 survey of Keidanren member companies revealed that 42 percent of companies (*n* = 289) indicated that they were Integrating SDGs into business strategies and practice, representing a 420 per cent increase since 2018. Meanwhile a survey conducted by Teikoku Databank (2022) produced several key data with regards to corporate attitudes toward SDGs in Japan (*n* = 1337). First, 23.6 per cent of companies understood the importance and meaning of the SDGs, while 28.6 per cent expressed that they wanted to better understand. Combined, they represented a 12.5-point increase since the 2021 survey. Significantly, it was found that 68.6 per cent of large companies were actively working on the SDGs compared with 48.9 per cent of SMEs. Regarding which SDGs were the focus of business activities, respondents selected goal 8 "Decent work and economic growth" (31.4%) most often, followed by goal 12 "responsible consumption and production" (22.9%) and goal 7 "Affordable and clean energy" (22.5%); goal 5 "Gender Equality" ranked 8th (11.9%). Finally, regarding the benefits of engagement with SDGs, 37.2 per cent of respondents indicated that it "improved corporate image", and 31.4 per cent indicated that it "improved employee motivation"; overall, 66.5 per cent of companies recognised benefits. More recently, companies in Japan have linked their diversity management efforts to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[5] Looking at Softbank's CSR Report 2021, for example, it can be seen that LGBT-related initiatives—expanding the definition of *haigūsha* (spouse) to include *dōsei pātonā* ("same-sex partner"); establishing a consultation desk, providing LGBT-related training, and so forth—have been coupled with goal 5. "Gender equality", goal 8. "Decent work and economic growth", and goal 10. "Reduced inequities" (Softbank, 2021). Returning to the Workplace Diversity Promotion Project (MHLW, 2020) company survey, when asked why they had implemented LGBT-related initiatives, selected by 67.8 per cent of respondents (*n* = 242), the most salient motivator by far was "Seeing the increase in social recognition, we decided we should work on it”. In particular, 79.8 per cent of the large companies (*n* = 119) selected this answer. Meanwhile, in the Keidanren (2017a) LGBT initiatives survey, in response to the question “Why do you think it is important to implement LGBT-related initiatives”, the most commonly selected answer was “Creating innovation and improving productivity based on diversity” (81.1%), followed by “Countermeasure against legal risk” (63.1%) (*n* = 213). In summary, diversity management in Japan seems to be characterised by a mix of business case and social justice rhetoric, with a focus on several dimensions of diversity, including “age” and “ability”. In particular, as a result of legal and economic drivers, the promotion of women in the workplace continues to receive significant attention. In practice, diversity management is mostly associated with larger businesses. These companies aim primarily to comply with laws and regulations, while also going beyond compliance to realise corporate social responsibility from an ethical and pragmatic perspective. Policies developed by Keidanren, international commitments, legal precedent, as well as social trends, have all influenced the scope and extent of initiatives related to diversity management. Overall, practicing diversity management can be seen to benefit the business in terms of image in the eyes of consumers and job applicants.

6.3 LGBT-related initiatives

According to the Workplace Diversity Promotion report (MHLW, 2020), 17.3 per cent of respondents in the company survey believed that it was important to create a workplace environment in which “sexual minorities” can easily work (*n* = 2220). Segmenting by size of business, it was found that 42 per cent of large companies believed that it was important (*n* = 276), compared with 17.4 per cent and 11.3 percent of the medium-sized companies (*n* = 770) and smaller companies (*n* = 1172), respectively. Further, it was found that only 10.9 per cent of companies had implemented LGBT-related *torikumi* (“initiatives”). Again, a significant difference was evident when segmenting by size: large companies (43.1%); medium companies (10%); and small companies (3.8%). Finally, of the companies that had implemented at least one LGBT-related initiative (*n* = 242), most (40.1%) indicated that the initiative(s) had been put in place within the past two to three years. This timing aligns with Keidanren’s 2017 policy proposal (see section 6.2.2). The MHLW (2020) company survey sorted the LGBT-related initiatives into the following seven categories: “policy system”; “consultation services”; “promoting understanding”; “recruiting and HR”; “facilitating trans people”; “benefits”; and “network support”. Looking at data from both the Keidanren (2017a) LGBT initiatives survey and the MHLW (2020) company survey, it can be understood that themost frequently implemented initiatives are related to education, anti-discrimination policy, and consultation services. Some businesses have gone beyond these initiatives, extending benefits to same-sex partners and making considerations for trans people with regards to toilet use, for instance, as well as establishing LGBT employee resource groups. With this in mind, the sections below will elucidate the following three themes: *Education and harassment prevention training*, which seems to be the most advanced with respect to diversity management in Japan; *Non-discrimination policies and benefits*, the implementation of which seems to be progressing; and *Workplace support*, seemingly the most limited of the three in terms of rollout. Under each theme, the types of initiatives being implemented will be covered and insights from the empirical inquiry will be shared. Additionally, each section will include a case study. Rather than simply considering each type of initiative in isolation, these case studies offer a more comprehensive overview of company initiatives, and also highlight organisational involvement in the wider business and LGBT communities. The first case is adapted from an interview that was conducted by the author on the 12th of December 2018. The author interviewed Rika and Nanami, D&I team leader and Director of HR, respectively, for the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games; excerpts from the transcript are provided. The second case is adapted from the book *LGBT to rōmu* (Teshima et al., 2021), and concerns the telecommunications company KDDI. The third case is adapted from the Pride index 2021 report (work with Pride, 2021) and concerns the convenience store franchise chain Family Mart, which was among the four recipients of a "best practice" award in that year's selection.

6.3.1 Education and harassment prevention training

In May 2018, the author participated in a seminar organised by *AFS tomo no kai* of the public benefit corporation AFS Intercultural Programs, Japan. The title of the seminar was *LGBT to* "*kokusai kōryū: Sei no tayōsei to jinken* (LGBT and international exchange: Diversity of '*sei*' and human rights)" and the lecturer was activist Sugiyama Fumino, a trans man. It was held in a small hall below the AFS office and attended by a group of about 50, mostly older people. Sugiyama used the session to talk about his life, explain the meanings of terms like intersex and transgender, and discuss the state of LGBT rights in Japan and overseas, as well as relate statistics about the LGBT population and the value of the domestic "LGBT market". Across Japan, this dissemination of "*kiso chishiki* ("fundamental knowledge)" about people who are LGBT+ has been occurring at multiple levels of society, in schools, in companies, in the media, as well as in government agencies. For example, Kumamoto City prepared a 14 page "LGBT+ support handbook" in 2018 for their staff. Inside, in a section titled "*Sei no tayōsei no sonchō* (respect for diversity of '*sei*')", gender identity, sexual orientation, biological sex, and gender expression are disambiguated, the "LGBT" acronym is explained, and statistics related to the LGBT population in Japan are provided (Kumamoto City, 2018). Subsequent sections cover difficulties that LGBT *tōjish*a face in daily life, guiding staff on language use when interacting with *tōjisha*, and advising against bullying and harassment, citing the 2016 Nijiiro Diversity survey. As such, results of the MHLW (2020) company survey found that over 90 per cent of the companies surveyed indicated that their employees had some awareness of LGBT people in society (*n* = 2388); the rate of awareness was slightly higher in large companies (*n* = 288) compared with small companies (*n* = 1274). In the same survey, looking at the scope and extent to which initiatives had been implemented, there were four types of initiatives listed under the "promoting understanding" category. The percent of respondents that selected each was as follows (*n* = 242): "Holding training or study sessions for executives or supervisors" 12.0 per cent; "Holding training or study sessions for managers" 11.2 per cent; "Holding training and study sessions for employees" 15.7 per cent; "Distribution and display of posters, leaflets, etc." 5.0 per cent. By business size, it could be seen that, on average, compared to small companies (*n* = 45), and medium-sized companies (*n* = 77), large companies (*n* = 119) were more likely to have implemented these initiatives—one notable exception was the distribution and display of posters: large companies = 4.2 per cent; small companies = 11.1 per cent. Moreover, under the category "recruiting and HR", "Education and training for recruiters" was selected by 15.6 per cent of small companies, by 10.4 per cent of medium-sized companies, and by 5.0 per cent of large companies. Overall, it could be understood that larger businesses were more likely than smaller businesses to have implemented education-related initiatives.

For example, when the interviewer asked Daiki, who worked for a small IT business, if there were any resources available, or otherwise any training provided, with regards to LGBT knowledge in his workplace, Daiki replied: "I am sorry that we don't have any seminar or education in [our] company. Our company is [a] very small business; only three managers and three employees". Meanwhile, Kazuki, who worked for a large television network, explained that every two to three years, the company held a *kōshūkai* ("training course") specifically about LGBT knowledge. The first year introduced the basics: "… there's 'LGBT' people and 'L' means lesbian …". The second year focused on LGBT representation in the media, including in "drama" and "variety" programs. In 2017, when I interviewed Kazuki, they had held a seminar for LGBT education, which included a guest speaker from outside the company; Kazuki also spoke. In 2019, the Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation (J-ALL) released the first edition of the *LGBT hōdō gairorain* (Guidelines for reporting on LGBT): the author received a copy upon attending the "LGBT and Media Representation" panel talk in January that year. Recognising that since 2015, the number of articles related to LGBT+ *tōjisha* had increased dramatically, the guidelines were developed in cooperation with nine newspaper, television, and web reporters from eight media companies to provide guidance on reporting about LGBT issues: "In particular, when interviewing, both parties should fully confirm the person's *sei no arikata* ("sexuality and/or gender identity"), and take care when considering the extent to which the person's 'name', 'face', and so forth, are made public so as to avoid outing (disclosing the person's sexuality and/or gender identity to a third party without consent)" (J-ALL, 2019b). Similarly, Kazuki's job had expanded to include proofreading articles that included LGBT-related content (see also chapter 8, section 8.2.2.2). He noted how words were changing all the time. For example, it was no longer "correct" to say "*seitenkan shujutsu*" to mean "sex reassignment surgery". Even between the first edition and second edition of the reporting guidelines, "LGBT" was modified to "LGBTQ". Thus, the dissemination of *tadashii chishiki* ("correct knowledge") about LGBT+ people, could be seen as one of the two main themes evident in education initiatives in businesses, the other theme being anti-harassment training.

Interviews in Study 1 of the current inquiry revealed that (larger) companies were placing a strong emphasis on harassment prevention in the workplace. Takeshi and Ashton, who worked for large companies in the transport and automotive industries, respectively, described "training" in their places of work that positioned diversity as a harassment issue. Of the training, which was accessible via his company's intranet, Takeshi said:

> So, I remember the material just like this, starting from, "Have you ever noticed that there are numbers of group of sexual interest: lesbian, gay, and normal person," like this. And, "you're not supposed to make discriminatory comments against such people," like using *homo* or such kind of things. "It's not good. You should regard that as a natural thing, as human," and such sort of thing.

He ultimately felt that the training was "very superficial". Ashton's company also provided online training, and at the time of the interview he had noticed that the company had been developing materials on various types of harassment within the last year. He specifically recalled information regarding sexual harassment and power harassment, as well as harassment toward specific groups of people, such as expectant mothers, the youth and the elderly, and LGBT people. For

Figure 6.2 Posters in office break room describing various types of harassment

Source: Photo taken by author (2020/08/11). From left to right: “Stop sexual harassment/maternity harassment”; “stop harassment”; “stop power harassment”. On each poster: “This is unacceptable!”

Ashton, it seemed as if the company was trying to cover comprehensively every possible form of harassment. It even touched on social media usage, mentioning messaging apps like Facebook messenger and LINE, signalling that harassment extends beyond the office. There were deadlines in place to complete the training. Afterwards, Ashton noted a distinct thread of conversation related to the training, with people being surprised about what could be construed as harassment: “‘Is that harassment? That’s [the] typical way in Japan’ … ‘That's harassment in certain countries’”. Ashton felt that diversity was “clearly represented in the material”. However, the volume of information was overwhelming: “the problem with training in general: there's so many ‘do’s and don'ts’ that one person can't remember”. When the interviewer asked about the scope of training, Ashton indicated that it was limited to an online manual: “I can't remember the last time we've had a face-to-face harassment type of training … it's a huge company so ... when you [have] workforce turnover, you [have to] train the new person. So this kind of manual, I think, is the best attempt to make people aware of the policy”. Inquiring about recourse if a harassment claim was made, Ashton communicated that the company had made it clear that “certain behaviour would not be tolerated” and that “action would be taken”. Ultimately, Ashton felt that the enforcement of such rules could never be perfectly executed.

As discussed in section 6.2.2., workplace harassment as an issue is becoming increasingly formalised in Japan, with a growing list of different “types” of harassment, each with their own abbreviated form: e.g., *pawahara* (“power harassment”), *matahara* (“maternity harassment”),

Table 6.6: Case 1 – Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

So we have several projects that we have worked on. The first one is a diversity and inclusion handbook. Why we made this book is summarised by this sentence, "know differences and show differences"; in order for us to appreciate differences, we have to know the differences. In this handbook we show the differences. In the second chapter, we talk about gender differences. We distributed this handbook throughout the organisation, including on the seats of the shuttle bus that company employees use. The second thing we did was apply to the Pride Index. We received the Silver Partner status. We also received the best practice award for sustainability plan, which includes a section on human rights. The third project we worked on was policies related to employment, including special leave, such as bereavement leave if a spouse passes away. How we define spouse includes a partner regardless of legal gender. And the fourth thing we worked on is the "human library". Basically, you read people like a book. Someone sits there and talks about things, and then we listen like an audiobook; to hear their story. The idea is to build a positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudice through dialogue. We are having the event tomorrow, and approximately 800 people will come, and hopefully they will deepen their understanding of LGBT. Most people, I think, don't actually understand the definition itself. The thing that we did last year was a "world café". It is designed to provide an opportunity for ideas through dialogue in a relaxed café-like environment. You talk to people casually, facilitating the natural flow of ideas. Finally, this is not directly related to LGBT, but we are distributing D&I stickers to people who made a pledge to promote diversity and inclusion, which does include the LGBT community.

sekuhara ("sexual harassment"), and more recently *SOGI hara*, in other words, harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Looking at figure 6.2, there is one panel (bottom row, centre column) that pertains to people who are LGBT. It reads: "Stop prejudice of sexual minorities. '*Homo*, *rezu*, *okama*', etc.: These [words] severely hurt *tōjisha*". The two main themes evident in LGBT+ education efforts in Japan, namely correct knowledge dissemination and anti-harassment training, are reflected in the MHLW (2020) company survey. Responding to a question about the content of "promotion of understanding within the company" initiatives, 79.5 per cent of companies selected "Fundamental knowledge about sexual minorities", and 67.9 per cent of companies selected "Prevention of harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity" (n = 156); the next most frequently selected response was "Difficulties and risks sexual minorities face in the workplace" (46.8%). Larger companies (n = 90) in particular seemed to be prioritising anti-harassment training (74.4%), as well as outing preventing training (45.6%). This could be in response to the amended labour laws (see section 6.2.2). In contrast, 22 per cent of medium companies (n = 41), and 8 per cent of small companies (n = 25) indicated that they included information related to outing in their education initiatives. From the interviews in Study 1, it can be understood that education and harassment training can be delivered through a number of methods, including workshops, seminars, and online courses. The interview with the D&I team of Tokyo 2020 above introduces some innovative event-based learning opportunities (see table 6.6).

Rika and Nanami were *shukkō* ("temporary transfer") employees and were assigned to the D&I team; a kind of transfer that they acknowledged as standard procedure in Japanese organisations. Rika had been working for Tokyo Gas, while Nanami had been working for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Regarding their assignment, Rika said: "It's not matter of who is doing this promotion of diversity and inclusion, including LGBTI. It's the matter of the concept. It's the matter of actualising the vision. So it's not about who initiated but it's more like stemming from the vision" (Nanami's translation). In his case study of a "pioneering" Japanese diversity manager, McDonald (2009) found that diversity managers acted as "interpreters" or "filters" of top management thinking and corporate diversity policy. Diversity managers were also put into positions that made them "directly responsible for educating company employees and developing, implementing and evaluating diversity management initiatives" (p. 5). Here too, Rika are Nanami acted as conduits through which the vision of diversity was actualised, in this case as prescribed by the values enshrined in the Olympic Charter. For many of these initiatives, including the handbook and the world café, they consulted Matsunaka Gon. Nanami expressed that she did not have much knowledge about people who are LGBT before being transferred to the D&I team, while Rika said she had some friends who are queer. Recognising that they weren't necessarily well versed in the needs of LGBT employees, having an external expert on hand, a *tōjisha* no less, seems responsible. Rika said that people recognised the work that they were doing, but were "yet to make it their own issue" (*jibun no koto janai mada*). McDonald (2009) argues that, because events are by their nature representative of a point in time rather than an ongoing effort, an event-only focus to diversity management could become self-defeating. Still, events such as the human library and the world café offer more opportunity to connect with *tōjisha* than an online training session ever could. Being able to sit with someone that is willing to be vulnerable and express their truth could be a powerful experience; in chapter 11 (section 11.4) the idea of *shared vulnerability* is elaborated upon. Understandably, for the sake of practicality (and budget), having an online training manual that can be updated as needed, and completed autonomously by staff periodically seems more viable, especially for larger companies. Altogether, these initiatives represent attempts to broaden the basic knowledge of the of LGBT concepts, which, especially in older people, as Rika averred, is underdeveloped, as well as instil a sense of responsibility in individuals with regards to how their words or actions could be perceived as harassment by LGBT+ people in the workplace.

6.3.2 Non-discrimination policies and benefits

Along with education to promote the understanding of LGBT people and harassment prevention training, some companies in Japan have introduced policies, or amended existing policy, explicitly in order to protect the rights of LGBT workers, as well as extended the scope of benefits to be inclusive of same-sex couples and LGBT families. Looking at the Workplace Diversity Promotion Project (MHLW, 2022) company survey, there are two categories of initiatives that are pertinent here: "policy system" and "benefits". In the former, there were four types of initiatives listed: "Formulation of a code of ethics and a code of conduct that relates to sexual orientation and gender identity"; "Formulation of internal regulations regarding harassment related to sexual orientation and gender identity"; "Having a person or department in charge of measures for sexual minorities"; and "Understanding the actual situation through in-house questionnaires, etc.". Overall, companies were more likely to have implemented the first two initiatives, in particular harassment regulations, than the second two; this aligns with having harassment prevention training, as discussed in section 6.3.1. Regarding the establishment of a department or person in charge of LGBT-related measures, 10.9 per cent of large companies had done so, compared with 0.0 per cent of small companies. Regarding the dissemination of in-house questionnaires, Ashton spoke about filling out surveys related to diversity in his company (see chapter 8, section 8.4.2). Looking at the "benefits" category, there were two types of initiatives listed. These initiatives and the percentage of respondents that selected them by business size are as follows: "Application for congratulatory or condolence leave available to same-sex partners", large companies (3.4%), medium-sized companies (2.6%), small companies (0.0%); and "Application for family benefits available to same-sex partners", large companies (2.5%), medium-sized companies (0.0%), small companies (0.0%). In study 2, the LGBT+ expatriate couples talked about how their employers recognised and supported their relationships; the scope of benefits was varied. For example, Wolfgang, who was an engineer for an automotive company, expressed that he and his partner Tobias were recognised as a unit from the beginning; their relationship was written into Wolfgang's contract. The company paid part of the monthly rent of their apartment, took care of moving and transportation costs, offered language training to them both, and provided yearly flights back to Austria. Martin, who was a director for an accounting firm, was able to ensure that that he and his husband Ian had access to the same level of health insurance, and all the benefits that they had enjoyed in the U.S. were also afforded to them in Japan. Meanwhile, Amando, who was doing post-doctorate research in brain science at a research institute was charged double for the "family apartment" that had been provided by the institute, despite the fact that his husband Nathan did not appear on the contract. Further, they were unable to access private health insurance for Nathan as the institute did not recognise same-sex couples. Importantly, while it is clear that there are organisations in Japan that do not have systems in place to support same-sex couples, the variation detected here may have less to do with the fact that the company is interfacing with a same-sex couple, and more to do with the company's extent of benefits in general, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. It became apparent that what was of more import was that the couples were legally married; marriage was the key to benefits (this is discussed in chapter 10, section 10.3.4). It can be expected that working for an MNC would be different than working for a domestic company or institute with regards to resources. As revealed in the company survey (MHLW, 2020), larger companies were more likely than smaller companies to offer these kinds of benefits. In the KDDI case, quite a comprehensive plan for same-sex couples and their families is described (see table 6.7).

From this case, it can be understood that KDDI implemented policy measures that consider the needs of people who are LGBT+ in response to a trans person wanting to transition in the workplace. This echoes the situation that occurred in Kazuki's company. As he described it, a coworker who entered the company as a legally designated man expressed that she wanted to live as a woman. As a result, the company changed their internal policy to broaden the scope of discrimination. However, at the time of the interview, the company still did not recognise same-sex couples. Kazuki attributed the decision to change company policy to the visibility of his trans coworker, and he hoped that his own visibility as the first out gay man in the company would also prompt change. Regarding policy system initiatives, the "KDDI Philosophy" clarifies the values and code of conduct for fulfilling the mission enshrined in the corporate philosophy: Each and every

Table 6.7: Case 2 – KDDI

In February 2013, an employee consulted with an in-house counsellor saying, “I want to work as the gender I identify with”; this was the catalyst for the company to start implementing LGBT-related policy. First, we held a seminar to ensure that human resource managers had the correct knowledge. We also conducted interviews with industrial physicians and attending physicians about matters that should be considered from a medical perspective, and collected information from other companies that are implementing and working on LGBT-friendly policies. In addition, the situation was explained to the supervisor of the person, both with the director of human resources, and individually. Since 2014, we have been conducting e-learning for all employees. At that time, legislation on same-sex marriage was ramping up overseas. At the beginning of the program, in response to the question, “Do you know what LGBT means?” about 25 per cent of employees answered “Yes”. This increased to 75 per cent after a year, and 98 per cent by 2020. In 2016, the gender field was removed from the job application form, and in 2017, the definition of spouse was expanded to treat same-sex partners as spouses according to internal regulations. In 2018, employees volunteered to participate in the parade of Tokyo Rainbow Pride. In addition, the company has been awarded gold, the highest rank in the “Pride Index” by work with Pride for consecutive years since 2016. There were two major changes in 2020. The first was the creation of a familyship (family relationship) application. This was introduced after receiving the feedback from employees with same-sex partners that they would like to have children in the future. In the familyship application, except in the case of legal restrictions, even if the employee does not have parental authority, the company would consider them a family member to the child of their partner. For example, allowances, congratulatory money, vacation, and insurance coverage for overseas job appointment are all covered to the extent that the company can provide. The name "familyship application" implies that although same-sex marriage has not yet been legislated in Japan, the company wants to show that same-sex couples are recognised as family. Second, every June since 2014, we have been conducting an e-learning awareness program. Since June 2020, the purpose of this project has been to convey the obligations of companies to prevent SOGI harassment and outings, in light of the updated laws related to power harassment.

Source: Adapted from Teshima et al., 2021.

employee works diligently to put these “values” and “judgment criteria” into daily practice to fulfil their responsibilities (Teshima et al., 2021). Among them, there is the clause “Diversity is the basis”, which specifies that “We hold dearly a spirit of respect that transcends dimensions of diversity such as gender, age, nationality, language, presence or absence of disability, faith, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, as well as titles and organisational differences, such that people can share in mutual respect and exchange opinions openly”. Additionally, one theme of “KDDI’s Sustainable Actions”, KDDI's SDGs initiative, is “respect for diversity”. Here, sexual orientation and gender identity are explicitly mentioned in KDDI’s Code of Conduct, which is “disseminated widely both inside and outside the company” (KDDI, 2021), as indicated in their sustainability report. Moreover, their “familyship application”, which earned them a “best practice” award in the Pride Index 2020, seems to be an outcome of direct consultation with KDDI employees in same-sex relationships, as well as with LGBT-supportive NPOs, as explained in a message from Yamada Yukiko of KDDI’s HR planning department.

These needs are reflected in the results of the Workplace Diversity Promotion Project (MHLW, 2022) employee survey. In response to the question “What initiatives do you think should be initiated to make the workplace comfortable for sexual minorities?”, 22.6 per cent and 22.1 per cent of the LGB respondents (*n* = 574) selected “Treat same-sex partners as spouses with relation to benefits” and “Formulate a code of conduct that explicitly bans discrimination on the basis of SOGI diversity”, respectively; in contrast 46.5 per cent of respondents selected “nothing in particular”. On the other hand, results from the Pride Index 2021 survey revealed that implementation of such initiatives, in particular same-sex partnership and family systems, were being utilised much less than businesses were expecting. Three per cent of companies indicated that 100 people or more were using the systems, including health insurance, family leave, and other benefits, while 56 per cent of companies indicated that as yet, no one had used the systems (*n* = 143); 35 per cent and 5 per cent of companies reported that between 1 and 5 and between 6 and 10 people, respectively, were using the systems (work with Pride, 2021). This trend was stable over a three year period. Answering the question “Are the users of the systems as expected?”, 54 per cent of respondents indicated that there were fewer users than expected, compared with one per cent that indicated more than expected (*n* = 137). For those that indicated less than expected (*n* = 97), 65 per cent averred that it was because coming out (to departments, to supervisors, to coworkers, etc.) was necessary to use the systems, 27 per cent argued that it was because obtaining documents that confirmed the relationship was necessary, and 8 per cent felt that it was because of complicated internal application processes. Overall, it was understood that utilitisation of these systems was undercut by the fact that LGBT+ employees were hesitant to disclose information about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. This was touched upon in the empirical inquiry: even if support systems for LGBT+ people are available in the workplace, no one will use them if they do not feel safe to do so. Thus, as discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.3.1) formal LGBT policies and benefits alone may not be enough to impact the workplace experiences of LGBT+ employees meaningfully.

6.3.3 Work environment

Finally, businesses in Japan are making efforts to create more inclusive workplace environments for LGBT+ employees to work in. In Japanese, *inkurūjon* (inclusion), a transliteration of the English word, is used in the business context. As in English, it is typically clumped together with *daibāshiti* (diversity). Inclusion may be variously translated as *hōkatsu*, *hōsetsu*, or *juyō*. For instance, in Keidanren's *Toward the realisation of Diverse and Inclusive Society* policy proposal (2017a), "*hōsetsu* (inclusion)" in the workplace is "required for all human resources to demonstrate their abilities to the fullest and to feel a sense of worth in their jobs (*yarigai*)" (p. 3). Meanwhile, on the website of Nissan Motor Corporation (2019), inclusion is conceptualised thusly: "Inclusion (the reception [*juyō*] of diversity) is about a climate in which, with a feeling of solidarity, diverse values and personalities are respected, and the full potential of each individual may be realised". In the MHLW (2020) company survey, there were three categories of initiatives related to work environment: consultation services; facilitating trans people; and network support. As mentioned, apart from the establishment of consultation services for LGBT+ people, these types of initiatives were uncommon. Moreover, although 8.3 per cent and 5.4 per cent of companies (n = 242) had set up consultation services within and outside the workplace, respectively, no companies had formulated any guidelines for these services. Consultation sessions may deal with issues of harassment, including sexual harassment, and may be the first step in a long and painful remediation process. These sessions may involve the disclosure of intimate and potentially confronting personal information. It goes without saying that respecting the individual's privacy is of upmost importance (see, for example, Terahara, 2018). Regarding in-house consultation, Teshima and colleagues (2021) express that the person in change should be provided with opportunities to participate in training to improve knowledge and skills and prepare a response manual to ensure that secondary harm does not occur to the person using the service. Meanwhile, in cases where the business does not have sufficient means to establish an internal consultation centre, contracting a lawyer, social insurance labour consultant or otherwise a specialised counselling service could be a possible solution; it is desirable to locate an organisation that has

Table 6.8: Case 3 – Family Mart (Okazaki City)

In July 2019, Family Mart signed a comprehensive partnership agreement with Okazaki City, Aichi Prefecture. While cooperating with each other on various initiatives as part of community-based efforts, Okazaki City opened an "LGBT telephone consultation service" in October 2020 and installed information cards in public facilities of the city. As a means of communicating this to the general public, we received a request from Okazaki City to cooperate in making announcements at Family Mart stores. Subsequently, from March 2021, we have installed LGBT phone consultation information cards at approximately 70 FamilyMart stores in Okazaki City. As a result of the installation, some franchise stores commented, "We need to understand LGBTQ issues. The sense of responsibility on the part of those who installed the cards has increased." In addition, a member of the Okazaki City office who was central to the implementation of this initiative said, "Seeing the number of cards installed at each store decreasing, I understand that there are people who definitely need them … this has led to self-learning". These efforts reconfirmed Family Mart's commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion and actively engaging in LGBTQ-related initiatives. Family Mart is proud to act as a representative company of these changing attitudes. In addition, the city of Okazaki informed us that the number of consultations increased due to the fact that information was delivered to many citizens and those who needed it, and that they were very grateful. We have said we would like to continue to cooperate with Okazaki City and promote understanding of LGBTQ in various ways.

Source: Adapted from work with Pride, 2021.

an understanding of SOGI diversity. The case of Family Mart's cooperation with Okazaki City demonstrates a way to elevate this initiative beyond the organisational-level to the community-level (see table 6.8).

Regarding Family Mart's wider commitment to LGBT inclusion, it is indicated that their diversity management practice operates on two axes: "Correct knowledge and fostering understanding" and "Creating safe and secure spaces" (Family Mart, 2020). In terms of the first axis, Family Mart holds LGBT seminars, and has uploaded videos and an original handbook explaining basic knowledge on their intranet for employees to view at any time. Regarding the second axis, along with the establishment of an external consultation desk as mentioned, Family Mart also distributes "ally goods", including stickers, to employees who wish to make themselves visible as allies. This is done with the intention of improving psychological safety in the workplace and fostering a culture in which people can speak freely. KDDI has also distributed “KDDI ALLY” stickers to its employees, which they can stick on their computer monitor or desk, for instance, to declare their allyship. According to their 2021 sustainability report, as of July 2021, approximately 3,000 employees have pledged their support (KDDI, 2021). Additionally, run by about 40 volunteer staff, in October 2020, KDDI established an “ally community” as a place for people to “deepen their understanding and know the thoughts of *tōjisha*” (p. 67). In chapter 3 (section 3.3.3), the roles that allies can play to support LGBT+ people (see, for example, Catlin, 2021) were explicated. An “ally”, as defined by KDDI and others (e.g., Kimura et al., 2021; Teshima et al., 2021) is someone who “understands” (*rikai*) and “supports” (*shien*) LGBT+ people. However, the extent or scope of understanding and support is never fully explicated. The definition found in the report prepared by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020b) does allude to some concrete actions allies should take: “Acquiring correct knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity. If there is a *tōjisha* experiencing difficulty, calmly listen and accept what they have to say. If you see or hear discriminatory behaviour, without turning a blind eye, point the behaviour out” (p. 4). Looking at the MHLW (2020) company survey, it can be understood that “network support” represented the least developed of the seven initiative categories, with the following percentages for each initiative type: “Efforts to support the *tōjisha* community within the company”, 0.8 per cent; “Efforts to increase the number of allies”, 0.4 per cent; and “Sponsoring and exhibiting external activities and events related to sexual minorities”, 0.4 per cent (n = 242).

Of course, businesses can also “show support” for the LGBT+ community in profit-oriented ways. In Tokyo, companies are increasingly involved in the annual Tokyo Rainbow Pride parade and festa (see chapter 5, section 5.1.3) with booths at the event promoting their products and services. As Itakura (2015) puts it: “TRP encourages queers in Japan to shop and travel as ‘out-and proud’ lavish consumers for those whom the staff identify [as corporate allies]” (p. 18). Whether this public display of support reflects the actual working conditions of LGBT employees remains to be seen. The commercialisation of queer culture and the tensions inherent in mainstreaming queerness is further explored in chapter 11, section 11.4.3. Among the corporate giants the likes of Google and IBM, smaller businesses and NPOs are also allotted space at Pride events. For example, Kasumi, who started her own business as a wedding planner, began offering her services to LGBT+ couples in Japan around 2012. That year, she participated in Nagoya Pride and Tokyo Pride, and was met with some resistance from the community. She felt that she was perceived as an outsider who didn't understand and was there only to exploit the "LGBT market". She persisted and after about 5 years had established herself in the community, alongside other businesses such as Hotel Granvia in Kyoto, which launched a wedding package for same-sex couples in 2014 (see Yotsumoto and Senba, 2017). Finally, as described in chapter 6.1.3, in Japan, business case rhetoric has been successful in engaging businesses in supporting wider community causes, such as the Viewpoint on Marriage Equality (VME) and the #EqualityActJapan campaign. Regarding the former, the researcher interviewed Alexander, Co-representative Director and co-founder of Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network (LLAN), who introduced the viewpoint during LLAN's 2018 gala event. A statement was issued by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, alongside four other Chambers, recommending that the Government of Japan extend the right to marry to LGBT couples. At the time of the interview, the VME had been endorsed by 107 organisations. Having worked with many of them, Alexander believed that the greatest hurdle to achieving marriage equality in Japan was the senior lawmakers of the LDP (see also chapter 5, section 5.2.3). He also wanted to engage Keidanren, seeing the economic organisation as potentially the "strongest voice" to endorse the VME.

The "facilitating trans people" initiative category included eleven types of initiatives, the most frequently selected by respondents being "Installation of accessible restrooms intended to be trans friendly": small companies (11.1%); medium-sized companies (9.1%); and large companies (1.7%). In this instance, it can be assumed that small companies may only have a single toilet, or otherwise one designated "men's" toilet, and one designated "women's" toilet. Simply removing any designations and supplying the same amenities in all toilets could be sufficiently trans-inclusive. In the PRIDE Index survey (work with Pride, 2021), 22 percent of companies indicated that they wanted to make their toilets gender inclusive but were unable to due to budgetary limitations or because they were renting the building (n = 61). In the case of trans people who are MtF or FtM, allowing them to use the toilet of the gender that they identify with was also selected frequently: small companies (4.4%); medium-sized companies (1.3%); large companies (5.0%). Next, "Consideration for trans people with regards to the gender field in application documents during hiring" yielded the following spread: small companies (8.9%); medium-sized companies (2.6%); and large companies (3.4%). In Japan, there has been a burgeoning movement to remove the *seibetsuran* ("gender field") from forms, which has hitherto been a ubiquitous feature on all manner of documents. In July 2020, Japanese Industrial Standards, which specifies standards used for industrial activities in Japan, reformatted the *rirekisho* ("curriculum vitae") to make the gender field optional, removing the ability to select between "male" and "female" (Teshima et al., 2021).

Subsequently, at the end of 2020, Kokuyo, a major stationary company, released *rirekisho* in line with the reformat (“Kokuyo, seibetsuran nai”, 2020). Meanwhile, companies like KDDI and Lush Japan have removed the gender field from their *entorī shīto* (“job application forms”) (Tokyo Bar Association, 2017). It was indicated that 2.5 per cent of companies had implemented the following three initiatives: “Consideration for trans people with regards to uniform and dress codes”; “Allowing trans people to use their own names”; and “Consideration for trans people during health checkups”.

With regards to the first initiative, in 2018, Omron, an electronics company based in Kyoto, standardised the design of their factory uniform globally; the original “blue for men” and “yellow for women” uniform design was discontinued (City of Kyoto, 2020). In this case, apart from segregating “men” and “women”, there was no practical reason for having different coloured uniforms. Regarding names, while people in Japan can legally change their name (see chapter 5, section 5.2.2), they can only do so “on justifiable grounds … with the permission of the family court” (Family Register Act, Cap 4, § 15 art. 107-2). As such, a discrepancy could occur between an individual’s *shimei* (“legal name”) and their *tsūshōmei* (“alias”). KDDI has endorsed the use of a *wākingu nēmu* (“working name”) for its employees who are trans (KDDI, 2021). None of the respondents in the MHLW (2020) company survey indicated that they had implemented trans-inclusive initiatives in relation to hormone replacement therapies or surgeries, such as flexible work hours or time off. On the other hand, looking at the employee survey, most trans participants (45.5%) indicated that there was “nothing in particular” they thought could be done to make the workplace more comfortable for them (n = 101). Other answers selected included: “Formulate a code of conduct that explicitly bans discrimination on the basis of SOGI diversity”, 24.8 per cent; “Considerations for using facilities such as restrooms and changing rooms”, 23.8 per cent; “Dissemination of a top-down message about policy initiatives regarding sexual minorities”, 22.8 per cent; and “Permission to use *tsūshōmei*” 21.8 per cent. Overall, the initiatives for trans employees category revealed that in some cases, more small companies had taken action than larger businesses. Arguably, this reflects the fact that smaller businesses are generally afforded greater flexibility in terms of managing their staff, as they do not necessarily have to deal with complex, rigid systems of operation that characterise larger businesses. Of course, this does not presuppose that smaller business operators should be so inclined to support LGBT+ employees in the first place. In summary, given that initiatives that support LGBT people in the workplace and also in the wider community are arguably the least developed of the various types of initiatives described in these sections, in chapter 11 (section 11.4) recommendations for what businesses in Japan can do in terms of creating an inclusive workplace environment are detailed. Specifically, a more systematic and intersectional approach to doing diversity management, one that operationalises vulnerability and reveals privilege, is advocated. Having completed the literature review and examined Japan's socio-historical and business community contexts with relation to LGBT+ people, the second half of this paper constitutes the empirical inquiry.

Notes

1. The *Nippon Keizai dantai Rengōkai* (Japan Business Federation), commonly referred to as Keidanren, is an amalgamation of the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations, which was established in 1946, and the Japan Federation of Employers' Associations, which was established in 1948 (Keidanren, n.d.). The two organisations were merged in 2002. As of April 1st 2020, Keidanren had a membership comprised of 1494 representative companies of Japan, 108 nationwide industrial associations, and the regional economic organisations for all 47 prefectures.
2. For more information, see http://workwithpride.jp/pride-i/
3. With the support of Keidanren, the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship was established in September 1989, and is a representative of organisations promoting CSR in Japan (see https://www.keidanren.or.jp/CBCC/en/about.html).
4. The full list of goals and targets can be viewed here: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global Indicator Framework after refinement_Eng.pdf
5. Along with private enterprise, local municipal bodies in Japan have also aligned SDGs with SOGI diversity. For example, in a pamphlet prepared by the City of Kyoto (2020), the following SDGs are highlighted: 3. Good health and well-being (a society that does not neglect medical treatment and welfare based on SOGI); 5. Gender equality (A society that encourages full participation regardless of gender or SOGI); 6. Clean water and sanitation (a society that does not neglect people who are trans in the development of public toilets); 8. Decent work and economic growth (An easy-to-work-in workplace without SOGI-related harassment); and 10. Reduced inequalities (An equal society with no SOGI-related disparity).

Chapter 7 – Study 1: Method

7.1 Participants

7.1.1 Japanese LGBT+ individuals

Sixteen Japanese LGBT+ individuals were recruited to participate in interviews between September 2017 and May 2019. Twelve of the participants were employed on a full-time basis, two were employed part-time and two were self-employed. Length of time employed in current workplace ranged from three months to 29 years (*M* = 8 years). Participants worked in a number of industries including transport, IT, media, manufacturing, and education, and their positions ranged from entry-level to middle management. Regarding gender, 13 participants were cisgender, and three were trans: MtF (*n* = 1); FtM (*n* = 2). The participants described their sexualities in the following ways: lesbian (*n* = 2), gay (*n* = 11), bisexual (*n* = 1), pansexual (*n* = 1), and straight (heterosexual) (*n* = 1).[1] Ages of the participants ranged from 24 to 51 (*M* = 38 years; SD = 9.3). All participants had completed tertiary education. Three participants were married, ten were in a relationship, and three were single (see appendix C for more detailed information about Japanese LGBT+ individuals).

7.1.2 LGBT+ expatriate individuals

Between January 2018 and May 2019, interviews were conducted with ten LGBT+ expatriate individuals. Four of the participants were from the USA, and the other six were from Brazil, Italy, Mexico, Panama, Sweden, and the UK. Status of residence was as follows: Eight of the participants held the Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services (ESI) (*n* = 8); temporary visitor (*n* = 1); permanent resident (*n* = 1). Years spent residing in Japan ranged from one year to 20 years (*M* = 8; SD = 6.5). Eight of the participants were employed on a full-time basis, one was employed as an independent contractor, and one was unemployed at the time of the interview. Length of time employed in current workplace ranged from 3 months to 11 years (*M* = 4.8 years). Occupations held by participants spanned a range of industries including automotive, IT, fashion, media, and tourism, and their roles ranged from entry-level to executive management. Regarding gender, eight participants were cisgender, one participant was non-binary, and one was genderfluid.[2] Two of the participants identified as lesbian, three identified as gay, two as bisexual, and one as pansexual. The participants' ages ranged from 25 to 40 (*M* = 31 years; SD = 6.3). All the participants had gained at least a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with two completing *senmongakkō* ("technical college") and three earning master's degrees. Five of the participants were single, three were in a relationship, and one participant was married (see appendix D for more detailed information about LGBT+ expatriate individuals).

7.1.3 LGBT+ allies

Five LGBT+ allies were interviewed between March 2018 and December 2018. These participants are called "allies" for the purpose of this research, although they did not necessarily identify as such (see appendix E for a brief introduction of the LGBT+ allies).

7.2 Procedure

7.2.1 Interview protocol

The primary method of data collection for Study 1 was an in-depth, semi-structured interview. An interview protocol was developed to elicit data relating to a) participants experiences of coming out in, and outside of, the workplace, and b) the opportunities and barriers present in the participants' everyday work life as LGBT+ individuals (see appendix F for an example of interview protocol questions, including probing questions for the LGBT+ interviewees). Depending on the participant(s) being interviewed, some of the questions were modified, or new questions were added. For example, when some trans participants were interviewed, questions regarding navigating the legal system during the process of transitioning were added. For the LGBT+ allies, questions related to their personal and professional advocacy for and partnership with LGBT+ individuals were included (see appendix G for example questions for LGBT+ allies interviews). The number of questions was kept to a minimum with a focus on open-ended questions, as recommended by Charmaz (2006). These questions were refined as the interviews progressed. The interview protocol was there to record information such as socio-demographic characteristics and take notes during the interview (e.g., observations, key words). It also helped bring the interview back on topic, or move the interview along if conversation trailed off. Put another way, the purpose of the interview protocol was not to ensure that all questions be answered systematically, but instead to provide gentle guidance when required; hence "semi-structured interview".

7.2.2 Recruitment process

Participants were recruited through both direct and indirect means, mostly through informal networks. Direct recruitment was achieved through the use of gay social apps. A call for interview participants was appended to a profile created by the author. Indirect recruitment occurred at social gatherings and in professional settings. Often, this research was brought up in conversation, and those listening would suggest a potential interview participant, acting as an intermediary. The other most common method was snowball sampling, where the interviewee would suggest another potential research participant (appendix H graphically describes the recruitment process of the Japanese LGBT+ individuals, LGBT+ expatriate individuals, and LGBT+ allies). The use of convenience sampling strategies is common in both qualitative and quantitative research pertaining to LGBT+ workplace issues (e.g., Creed & Scully, 2000; Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Law et al., 2011). In a review of nine studies, Croteau (1996) concluded that it is not problematic to use convenience sampling in a single qualitative study where the goal is to discover and detail lived experience rather than to generalise. It is important to recognise that, while the data set is deep and rich, it provides phenomenological information about only a narrow range of LGBT+ individuals within the entire population. Sample diversity was increased by preferentially scouting and interviewing individuals who did not identify as cisgender and gay. As a result, some potential participants were not interviewed.

7.2.3 Interview Format

At the beginning of the interview, each participant was given an informed consent form to read (see appendix I). They were given the opportunity to ask questions or raise any concerns. After signing the form, audio-recording commenced. Collecting socio-demographic information preceded the main interview questions. The interviewees were given ample opportunity to speak freely, and the conversation often went on tangents. Along with responding to participants using active listening, summarising, and minimal encouragers, the author related their own personal experiences as a means of empathising with the interviewee. Fontana and Frey (2008) describe this as an emphatic approach in which "...the interviewer becomes an advocate and partner [in the research]" (p. 117). And as Suddaby (2006) notes, grounded theory is an interpretive process in which the researcher is considered an active element. Consequently, the data are shaped not only by the interviewees, but also by the interviewer.

Interviews lasted between 22 and 180 minutes (M = 86 min). Generally, time limitations were discussed ahead of the interview. Sometimes the interview was cut short due to work scheduling or other commitments. In all cases the interviewee(s) determined the location of the interview. For the most part, interviews were conducted in cafes, although a few were conducted in the interviewees' place of residence. Although the public locations were less ideal insofar as they were typically noisy and replete with distractions, they were chosen because they were convenient for the participant and in some cases, because they represented a space in which the participant(s) could feel safe. The audio recordings were not compromised.

During the interviews, both English and Japanese were used. In group interviews where extensive Japanese was used by one of the participants, other participants would aid in interpreting, based on a prearranged agreement. Also, five participants consented to the use of identifying information (including name) in published materials. The remaining participants were assigned pseudonyms, and any potentially identifying information (including place of work) was obscured. The pseudonyms were produced by an online random name generator, and the participant's age and country of origin were taken into account.

7.3 Data Analysis

7.3.1 Preparing the data for coding

The data consisted of almost 36 hours of audio-recording, documenting 25 interviews with Japanese LGBT+ individuals, LGBT+ expatriate individuals, and LGBT+ allies. After completing the first interview, the intention to transcribe all of the audio recordings in full was set. The first interview was 51 minutes long, and was transcribed manually. Spext, an auto-transcription app that ran in the Google Chrome browser was used to transcribe all subsequent recordings. After uploading the audio file, it was quickly processed and the complete transcript was made available for editing. The transcription was far from perfect, and factors like background noise and speech patterns affected accuracy. Spext could not recognise Japanese, so all instances of Japanese language use were transcribed manually. Punctuation and capitalisation were generally missing or inaccurate. In some instances, neither the app nor the author was able to discern what was being said. These sections—usually just a single word—were designated "(could not understand)". Instances of laughter, as well as illustrative hand movements, inflection of voice, and sounds that were made by the interviewee as a means of communicating beyond the actual words spoken (e.g., sarcasm, emphasis) were noted. Additionally, breaks in the flow of the interview (e.g., someone got up to use the bathroom; a serviceperson came over to take the order) were noted.

Once editing was completed, the file was exported and saved as a Word document with a letter and number designation to ensure the interviewee's anonymity. Depending on the number of words spoken per minute, it took an hour to edit about 10 to 20 minutes of audio. The length of the transcripts ranged from 5 pages to 32 pages, in total amounting to 355 pages. The socio-demographic data was compiled in an Excel spread sheet. Typically, the recording was transcribed directly following the interview, before the proceeding interview was scheduled, although it was not uncommon for recordings to be transcribed in batches of two or three.

7.3.2 Coding

Coding is the process of sorting the collected data into meaningful units. The first phase of the analysis of the interview transcripts began with *line-by-line coding*. Each line of the transcript was coded into more compact statements, coding with words that reflected actions, as suggested by Charmaz (2006). The format for facilitating this coding was as follows: a two column table in a Word document was created, and the widths of the columns were adjusted so that the left column was about 30 per cent of the table width. The interview transcript was inserted into the right column, and the left column was used for entering codes in the relevant location. In this way, either column could be worked in efficiently without affecting the other. Below is an example of the line-by-line coding process, featuring excerpts from two interviews (see table 7.1). As demonstrated above, the codes were active, succinct, and close to the data. Gerunds (i.e., verb form ending in "ing") were used where applicable to detect processes. Some of the codes constructed were *in vivo* codes. Using the exact words of the participants, "drinking party" and "don't talk about it" (highlighted in table 7.1) are *in vivo* codes. Charmaz (2006) identifies three kinds of useful *in vivo* codes (examples are derived from this research):

- *General terms*: condense meanings and are assumed to be understood by everyone (e.g., "the nail that sticks out")
- Participants' *innovative terms*: capture meanings or experiences, or offer fresh perspective on already established terms (e.g., "start from scratch")
- Insider *shorthand terms*: specific to a particular group that reflect their perspective (e.g., "*gaijin* card")

Many of these *in vivo* codes became category labels used in the next phase of analysis: *focused coding*.

Importing the interview transcripts into NVivo (ver. 12), large segments of text were sorted, using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to categorise the data. In the first excerpt in table 7.1, the following codes were useful: "*nomikai*" and "creating a story".[3] In excerpt 2, the codes "ignore", "don't talk about it", and "safety" were selected to capture, synthetise, and understand the main themes in the statement. Focused coding facilitated by NVivo helped to compare codes across interview transcripts. This was not a linear process, but rather what Creswell (2007) describes as a "zigzag" process: moving back and forth between collecting data and analysing data. As the number of coded transcripts increased, the completed line-by-line coding from older transcripts was periodically re-examined. Phenomena that may have been too implicit to discern initially, and therefore glossed over, came to light in this second (or even third)

Table 7.1 Example of line-by-line coding process

	Excerpt 1 Takeshi, age 51, identified as gay
Drinking party Men talking about good/bad aspects of women is universal Wondering what kind of story is good “Hitting up” famous girls and actress Get drunk; always mention sexual things Simulating story in brain Creating a hypothetical story	A lot of situations happen. For instance, when we have a drinking party, I'm a person who do not drink a lot, and always male person like to talk about female things like good/bad, and always ask, “What kind of female do you like?” This is universal. So on occasion I was always wondering what kind of story is good for them. So I always say, how should I say, hitting up some really famous girls and actress, and say, “Oh, I like that girl. I like her.” Something like that. Or even sometimes when they get drunk and always say mention about the sexual things, it's unknown in a sense. So I would always simulate the story in my brain, and I create it, just a hypothetical story.
	Excerpt 2 Ami, age 29, identified as lesbian
People tend to just ignore Consider sexualities a kind of hobby; said by politician Lack of activism **Don't talk about it** Change is slow Ignore; not aggressive = safe place for “people like us” Plus minus	Well, I feel like people tend to just ignore. Because a lot of people consider LGBT, well like sexualities, kind of like a hobby. And they, I think, you know, especially old people even politicians said something like that, too. And, there's not a lot, there's not a lot of activism going on here. We tend to just ignore and just; we don't talk about it. So yeah, so that's why our, move- like change is really, really slow. But um, on the other hand, the things you said like it could be a safe place for people like us too because, because people ignore they're not gonna be aggressive. So yeah, plus minus, plus minus.

sweep of the data. This constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is a seminal component of grounded theory, and is what distinguishes ground theory from other methods of qualitative analysis. During this process it became increasingly apparent that, while there was some overlap, groupings of salient categories for the Japanese LGBT+ individuals were different than those for the LGBT+ expatriate individuals. The analysis had uncovered two distinct theories.

To tease out the major themes of these emerging theories, after all of the interviews had been conducted, transcribed, and coded, the codes were organised hierarchically using NVivo's Mind Map feature. Examining the relationships between codes, potential core categories were identified. Strauss (1987) proposes the following criteria for determining core categories: (a) a category's centrality in relation to other categories; (b) frequency of a category's occurrence in the data; (c) its inclusiveness and the ease with which it relates to other categories; (d) clarity of its implications for a more general theory; (e) its movement toward theoretical power as details of the category are worked out; and (f) its allowance for maximum variation in terms of dimensions, properties, conditions, consequences, and strategies. For the LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort), “identity”, “safety”, and “disclosure” were determined as the core categories. Likewise, “marriage”, “don’t talk about it”, and “representation” were decided for the Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort (J cohort). In the context of the Mind Map, these core categories represented “parent ideas”, under which the subcategories, or “child ideas”, were arranged. Integrating the core categories for each cohort, theories that were dense and saturated were developed.

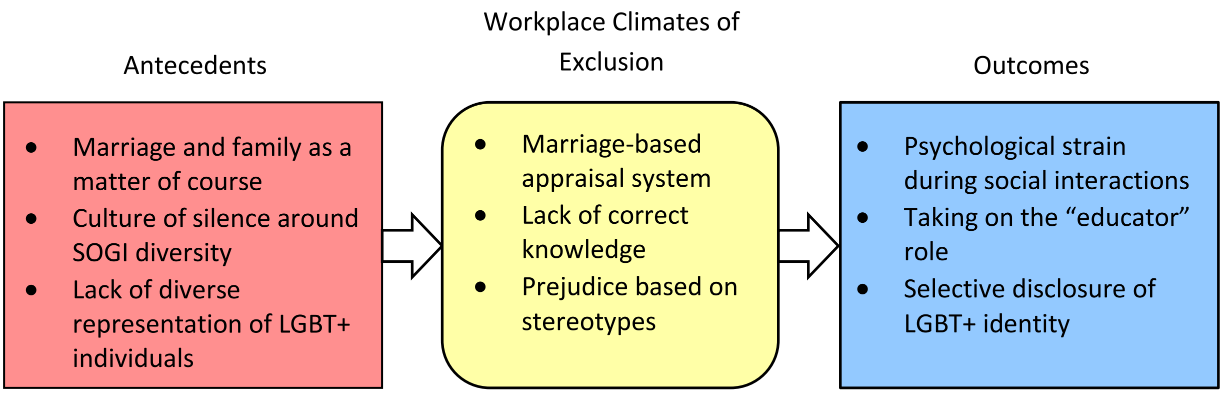
7.4 Emergent theories

7.4.1 Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort

For the J cohort, the themes that emerged from the data analysis constitute the antecedents and outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion, described in the conceptual framework below (see figure 7.1). In effect, the “black box” of exclusionary workplace culture in companies in Japan is unlocked by understanding the lived experiences of Japanese LGBT+ individuals. In its first iteration, this conceptual framework was visualised as three concentric rings, representing societal-level systems (now “antecedents”) in the outermost ring, company-level climate (now “workplace climates of exclusion”) in the middle ring, and individual-level behaviours (now “outcomes”) in the innermost ring. This multilevel model was abandoned in favour of a linear, stage mode that more clearly demonstrates the ways in which societal norms and values shape workplace climate, which in turn influences employee behaviour. With this in mind, the following questions were considered:

a. Why do Japanese LGBT+ employees feel excluded in their workplace?
b. In what ways do experiences of exclusion influence Japanese LGBT+ employee attitudes, behaviours, and performance?

Figure 7.1 Conceptual framework describing the antecedents and outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion for Japanese LGBT+ employees

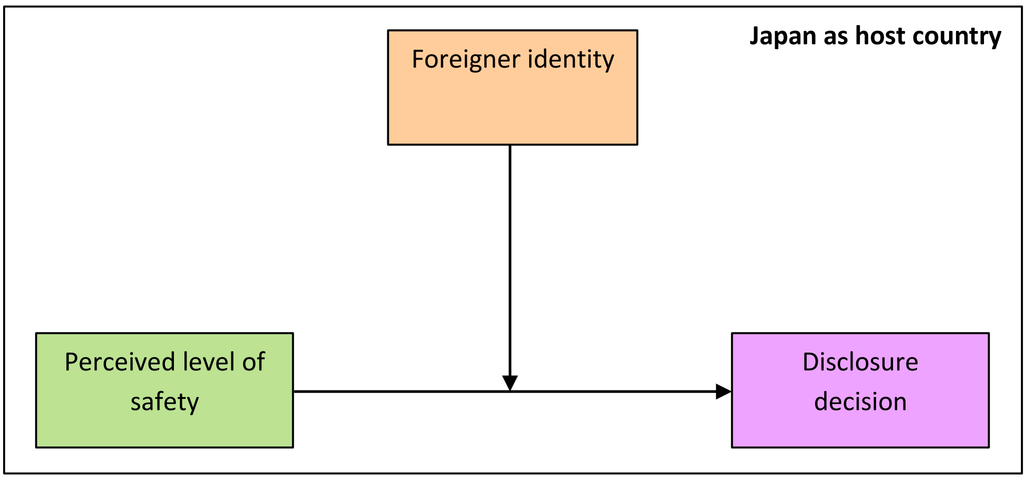


7.4.2 LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort

Turning to the E cohort, based on the themes that emerged from the grounded theory analysis, a conceptual framework that describes how LGBT+ expatriates in Japan construct and manage their identities was developed, dubbed the "*gaijin* effect" (see figure 7.2). Here, *perceived level of safety* describes the independent variable and *disclosure decision* describes the dependent variable. The moderator variable, in this case *foreigner identity*, affects the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). For the LGBT+ expatriate individual, deploying their foreigner identity strengthens the positive relationship between perceived level of safety and the disclosure decision. Simply put, the safer the individual feels, the more likely they are to disclose their LGBT+ identity. Here, disclosure may include explicit naming and claiming of sexualities and/or genders, as well as implicit signaling of LGBT+ identities through intentional presentational cues, such as dress and comportment. As revealed in the proceeding chapters, the LGBT+ expatriate individuals utilised a variety of strategies when coming out. Extant research has not considered the moderating effect of foreigner identity on the relationship between perception of safety and the disclosure decision. Analysis of the data uncovered the ways in which both LGBT+ and foreigner identities were managed and deployed by LGBT+ expatriate individuals working in Japan, evoking the following questions:

a. How do LGBT+ expatriates reconcile their visible foreigner identity with their (in)visible LGBT+ identity?
b. How do LGBT+ expatriates assess the level of safety and inclusion in the context of Japan?

Figure 7.2 Conceptual framework of the *gaijin* effect



Notes

1. Someone who identifies as pansexual is attracted to any and all gender(s) (Mardell, 2016). In Japan, the term *pansekushuaru* (transliteration of the English term) is used (Arai, 2016). Airi also identified as pansexual and queer, but expressed that she felt most comfortable identifying as bisexual.
2. "Genderfluid: Having a gender that changes" (Mardell, 2016, p. 12).
3. The category label "drinking party" was changed to "*nomikai*", as it was frequently used by participants. This also meant that the Japanese term and the specific meanings attached to it were preserved.

Chapter 8 – Study 1: Findings

8.1 Level of disclosure across different life domains

8.1.1 Comparison across cohorts

Of the 26 LGBT+ participants interviewed, none were completely out. Indeed, as Hill (2009) puts it, coming out "is a complex process that occurs at multiple levels and is never fully complete" (p. 40). Based on information from the interviews, level of disclosure across four life domains—i.e., family, friends, work, and public—where 5 indicates "completely out" and 0 indicates "completely closeted", was determined. While the process of assigning values was by no means scientifically rigorous, this measure clearly demonstrates the varying levels of disclosure LGBT+ individuals navigate across different work and nonwork contexts. Participants from both the Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort (J cohort) and the LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort) were, on average, less likely to be out to family members than to friends, and were even less likely to be out at work. Recent surveys of convenience samples of LGBT+ individuals in Japan clearly demonstrate the ubiquity of partial and incongruent patterns of disclosure (see table 8.1). Echoing the current inquiry, participants of these surveys were most likely to be out to their friends, and least likely to be out at work. Table 8.2 and table 8.3 show the level of disclosure across different life domains for the J cohort and the E cohort, respectively. Here, "Family" included immediate family (i.e., parents and siblings) as well as extended family (e.g., cousins). In both cohorts, participants were more likely to be out to their mother than to their father, and were usually out to at least one, if not all, sibling(s). This reflects findings by Tamagawa (2018)

Table 8.1 Collated data of various surveys describing coming out experience of LGBT+ participants

Year	*Institute*	*No. of respondents*	*Percentage of respondents out:*			
			Family	*Friends*	*Work*	*Not out*
2015	NHK	2401 (2561)[+]	51.2%	80.7%[b]	45.1%	(6.2%)
2018	Recruit Sumai Company	362	17.5%[a]	29.4%[b]	4.2%[c]	45.9%
2018	Nijiiro Diversity	1612	44.4%*	68.3%*	32.45*	12.3%*
2019	Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc.	1585 (223[#])	5.2%	14.5%	3%	78.8%

Source: NHK (2015), Recruit Sumai Company (2018a), Nijiiro Diversity: CSG (2019), and Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc. (2019); [+]Two separate questions about coming out were asked; [#]weighted sample; *Average across respondents; [a]Family divided into "parents" and "siblings"; [b]Friends divided into "LGBT friends" and "non-LGBT friends"; [c]Work divided into "coworkers", "boss" and "HR".

Table 8.2 Level of disclosure across different life domains (J cohort)

Name	Family	Friends	Work	Public
Takeshi	0	2	0	0
Haru	2	4	0	0
Daiki	0	3	0	0
Rin	4	**5**	**5**	**5**
Jun	4	3	0	0
Hide	5	4	0	0
Shogo	0	4	4	**5**
Georgie	**5**	**5**	4	4
Ken	4	4	0	0
Yuki	1	4	3	1
Kazuki	**5**	**5**	**5**	4
Ami	**5**	**5**	4	4
Mizuki	4	**5**	4	2
Airi	4	4	4	3
Yoshi	4	4	1	0
Shin	0	3	0	0
Mean	**2.9**	**4**	**2.1**	**1.7**

who found that, in a Japan-based survey of 136 LGBT+ people, fathers were perceived as least familiar with LGBT+ issues, least adaptable, and less permissive than others. For example, Mizuki came out as pansexual to her mother, and then to her brother. Her father was aware of her activism, and she had invited him to some queer events. Yet, she was reluctant to come out to him explicitly, because she felt that he wouldn’t take her sexuality seriously. The decision not to disclose was cemented by a conversation in the car: Commenting on the recent separation of Higashi Koyuki and Masuhara Hiroko, her father wondered if “they just got married because they wanted attention”.[1] Mizuki expressed her anger at this offhand remark, and the conversation was subsequently shut down by her father, leaving the disagreement unresolved. In a later conversation, Mizuki told her mother that her partner at the time was FtM. Her father was also present, but she did not think that he would have understood the term. She concluded by saying that he “might get the gist of it but, I haven't really directly told him about my sexuality”. This highlighted the first of three observations regarding the disclosure decision of the participants in this study. There was an acknowledgement that although LGBT+ identity was not something that was discussed openly, it was something that could be implicitly communicated and understood.

Table 8.3 Level of disclosure across different life domains (E cohort)

Name	Family	Friends	Work	Public
David	**5**	4	4	0
Ashton	2	3	0	0
Leonardo	**5**	4	4	3
Carlos	2	3	3	0
Márcia	2	3	4	0
Petra	4	4	4	0
Renata	**5**	4	0	1
Michelle	**5**	**5**	4	0
Skye	3	4	4	3
Ruth	4	**5**	3	3
Mean	**3.7**	**3.9**	**3**	**1**

Reflecting other research (e.g., Recruit Sumai Company, 2018a), here "Friends" referred to LGBT+ friends and non-LGBT+ friends. Participants in this study were more likely to be out to friends who were also LGBT+. Some participants talked about only recently coming out to their friends from high school, while others had been out since high school. Speaking with Haru, he explained that he found it difficult to come out to some of his "straight" friends:

> …it's hard for me to be out to some of my straight friends because of the Japanese culture conservative manners...I don't feel like being judged after coming out. And some people think that I'm imposing my sexuality onto them because I come out without asking or something… 'It's harassment'. That kind of comment makes me hesitant to come out to my straight friends…

Based on previous experience, Haru was anticipating that some people may feel harassed by him opening up, especially unprompted, about his sexuality. While Haru wanted to be honest, he also wanted to protect himself from negative outcomes, as well as maintain amiable relationships. Thus, the second observation regarding the disclosure decision was that thinking of others was important when deciding whether or not to come out. Disclosure at "Work" included disclosure to coworkers, superiors, human resources, or otherwise to the entire workplace. Of the J cohort, seven (44%) of the participants were completely closeted in their current place of work, compared with two (20%) of the E cohort. Two of the participants in the J cohort had come out to their entire workplace proactively, while most of the other participants from both cohorts came out as necessary or when asked directly. The complexity of outness at work was explicated by David:

> I am more careful here than I would be in other places to not mention [my sexuality] or be super out about it in business functions with people outside the company because I'm aware especially if you're working in large companies they might be bothered by it and I don't think it would ruin a deal, but I think it could sour a relationship or just kind of make [things] awkward… in the business environment I wouldn't be out anyway, I wouldn't be like, you know, telling people about my boyfriend or anything…

While he was comfortable to be openly gay in his workplace and to be a resource and ally to LGBT+ employees as the CTO, for David, the wider "business environment" was not a place to talk about his boyfriend. The third observation regarding the disclosure decision was that the participants wanted to be taken seriously and maintain a professional image.

Finally, disclosure in "Public" meant that individuals were communicating, either implicitly or explicitly, information about their LGBT+ identity to an indeterminable number of people in the public domain. To elaborate, visual and behavioural signals are examples of implicit disclosure. Some of the participants used clothing to express their gender, while others displayed affection for an apparent same-sex partner in a public setting. This kind of implicit disclosure was typical in the E cohort. Having a mass media or social media presence, details of LGBT+ identity might be explicitly written about or vocalised. Of the J cohort, quite a few of the participants had disclosed their LGBT+ identity in various online news articles and blogs, and even on television.

The participants with a significant media presence skewed the mean level of disclosure in the public domain for the J cohort. Participants in the E cohort had disclosed their LGBT+ identity on social media or mass media in Japan comparatively less. Overall, it can be seen that the disparity between level of disclosure across different life domains was much more pronounced in the J cohort, and that the E cohort were, on average, more out at work (M = 3). Variables such as age and place of work may have influenced the disclosure decision.

8.1.2 Comparison across "age" and "gender" variables

Participants were cognisant of the generation gap, and also believed that certain industries were more liberal and progressive than others. Exploring the variable "age", cohorts were separated into "older" and "younger" groups.[2] Calculating the means for total level of disclosure across all life domains, and for level of disclosure in the work domain, it was found in both cases and across both cohorts that participants in the "younger" group were more out than those in the "older" group. In the J cohort specifically, "younger" participants' level of disclosure in the work domain was twice that of the "older" group. Looking at the place of work as well as position could be a clue in understanding this discrepancy. In the case of the "older" group, they were all working for more traditional Japanese companies in managerial or leadership roles. Among the "older" group, Kazuki and Rin were the outliers, completely out at work. They were in the media and advertising industries respectively. Meanwhile, the "younger" group worked in a mix of industries in mainly service roles. Ken and Shin were completely closeted at work, and were in manufacturing, and real estate, respectively. Significantly, most of the "younger" group had spent time living abroad. Correlations between gender and level of disclosure were then considered.

For each cohort participants were divided into the following groups: "trans" (n = 5); "cisgender female" (n = 8); and "cisgender male" (n = 13).[3] In the J cohort, those in the "cisgender female" group had the highest level of disclosure at work score (M = 3.7), followed by "trans" (M = 3), and "cisgender male" (M = 1.4). The participants in the "cisgender female" group were younger, worked in entry-level positions or the service industry, and were more politically active. In the E cohort, again, those in the "cisgender male" group had the lowest score (M = 2.7), and those in the "trans" group had the highest score (M = 3.5), with the "cisgender female" group in between (M = 3). Regardless of age, place of work, and job role, on a whole, participants in the "cisgender male" group were least likely to disclose their sexual orientation in public and private life domains. Reflecting on the "trans" group across both cohorts, there were individuals who were making changes to their gender expression in their current place of work. As will be discussed below, they first went to top management to seek support, and then went about disclosing, either explicitly or implicitly, their gender in their place of work. Others in the "trans" group entered their current place of work with a stable gender expression. They did not disclose their trans history because they did not feel safe to or that it was necessary. On top of this, trans participants had intersecting sexual orientation(s). Trans individuals, just like cis individuals, can have any (or no) sexual orientation. This was another layer of disclosure the trans participants had to navigate.

Ultimately, when it came to coming out, every participant had a different level of disclosure configuration across the life domains of family, friends, work, and public. At the bare minimum, they had friends with whom they could share their LGBT+ identity. These friends were likely to have also been LGBT+. By recognising this level of variability, and understanding that coming out is neither an all-or-nothing nor a one-size-fits-all process, companies can support LGBT+ employees in nuanced, individualised ways. The gravity of the act of coming out should not be understated or trivialised. In this study, it was observed that understandings of SOGI diversity could operate implicitly, that thinking of others was part of the disclosure decision, and that

LGBT+ individuals wanted their sexuality or gender to be taken seriously by those they told. Given the size of the sample, this data did not undergo statistical analysis, and as such, these results should be interpreted with caution. The results presented here are not representative and lack generalisability. Nonetheless, this analysis reveals how the interplay of variables such as age, gender(s), and place of work and position can influence the disclosure decision of LGBT+ individuals in different life domains. Confounding factors such as personality were not considered. Importantly, as touched upon in chapter 3 (section 3.1.3) "coming out" is a product of western identity politics. In the interviews, some of the participants, such as Shin, expressed that it was not important to them to come out at work. Meanwhile, in the *LGBT ishiki kōdō chōsa 2019* (Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc., 2019), 40.1 per cent of respondents agreed with the question, "Even if there are no hinderances (*shishō*) in work or daily life, I don't think it's important to come out", compared with 25.7 per cent that expressed that they would want to come out if there were no hinderances (*n* = 1585; weighted sample = 223). It is erroneous to construe the "coming out" narrative as a universal experience for queer people. With that said, the rest of this chapter will explore the workplace experiences of the J cohort and E cohort.

8.2 Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort

Here the six emergent themes generated from the grounded theory data analysis that were salient to experiences of exclusion for the J cohort are detailed. The first three themes are the antecedent variables to workplace climates of exclusion for LGBT+ employees: (1) marriage and family as a matter of course, (2) a culture of silence around SOGI diversity, and (3) a lack of diverse representation of LGBT +individuals. The second three themes are the outcome variables of workplace climates of exclusion for LGBT+ employees: (1) psychological strain during social interactions, (2) taking on the "educator" role, and (3) selective disclosure of LGBT+ identity. Quotes from interviewees are used to illustrate the multiple perspectives of the individuals directly involved in the phenomena under inquiry. For companies to better understand the challenges that LGBT+ individuals face, a report commissioned by the United Nations (UN) highlights the importance of first voice inclusion. It is argued that the people who are living the social issue usually have the best understanding of the problem and know how best to address it (United Nations, 2017). With that said, the interviewees are speaking only from personal experience, and their statements should not be taken as representative of any group or community.

8.2.1 Antecedents to workplace climates of exclusion for LGBT+ employees

8.2.1.1 Marriage and family as a matter of course

Takeshi was married to a woman, and had two sons. He identified as gay and had a male partner of six years. His family did not know about this relationship, and in his workplace the image of the nuclear family was maintained. He was a manager and a trainer for a large Japanese airline company. He believed that being open about his sexuality would destroy his family, and did not feel he would ever come out at work for fear of discrimination. Takeshi's story reveals the complexities of presentation of self within public and private contexts. He saw himself as the product of an era in which marriage and family are *atarimae* ("a matter of course"). And while an increasing number of people in Japan are remaining unmarried, many interviewees expressed a sense of pressure to get married, stemming from their parents, their workplace, and from society in general. Airi worked part-time as a bartender and was critical of the institution of marriage, and of how married individuals have been afforded certain privileges that many unmarried individuals cannot enjoy:

> What we need [to] be criticising is not the fact that there is no same-sex marriage. Yes, that's something that we should be criticising, but why does marriage give people certain rights? It's like this never-ending vicious cycle of saying that being in a heterosexual relationship is happiness and success.

Airi, who had a girlfriend, admitted that she struggled internally with the idea that, in order to meet the expectations of family and society, it would be easier for her to be in a relationship with a man. In the workplace, marriage could mean the difference between advancement and stagnation. Hide was the director of HR for a semiconductor company. He spoke about the importance of finding a company with a workplace culture in which employee performance appraisal and marital status are not linked:

> For me, it's more practical like, the company culture or company evaluation system does not link to your marriage status. [At] some companies, if you are single, you cannot be promoted to the next level, or you cannot be transferred to this department.

Hide insisted that single men, heterosexual or otherwise, are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to long-term career potential. As Lunsing (2001/2016) explains, married men are seen as more trustworthy in the eyes of their superiors at work because they have taken upon themselves the responsibility of supporting a household. Revealed here are implicit social norms that reward those who adhere to them, and systematically exclude those who do not.

8.2.1.2 A culture of silence around sexuality and gender

If everyone is assumed to be heterosexual and cisgender, that doesn't leave much space to talk about and explore diverse sexualities and genders. Heteronormative (and cisnormative) assumptions and practices regulate everyone's beliefs, behaviours, and desires, and restrict the range of possibilities of identification and expression (Afshar, 2004). Shin, who had recently started working in real estate, had not considered it important or necessary to come out at work: "Private is private. But, I kinda enjoy the straight male life at work … I don't really care about being straight at work." Shin was comfortable to pass as straight in his workplace. Indeed, when he had come out to straight friends in the past, he had been met with the response: "But you're not *onē*".[4] Shin did not fit the narrow, stereotypical image of a gay man, so his sexuality was rendered invisible. Yoshi, a gay, trans man, had recently been transferred by his employer from Osaka to Tokyo. He was out in his workplace in Osaka, but in Tokyo details of his transition from female to male were known only by HR, and he was still designated female on his *koseki*. He explained that while he was never told not to discuss his gender identity in the workplace, he felt that the company was not particularly trans-friendly, so it was best not to talk about it. Yoshi was married and used the word *pātonā* (partner) to refer to his husband.[5] Although some people echoed this usage, many continued to refer to his partner as *okusan* (wife). At the time of the interview, Shogo had just become Mr Gay Japan 2018, and would be the first person to represent Japan in Mr Gay World. Suddenly he was a public figure in the discourse surrounding LGBT+ issues in Japan. Having to navigate this dramatic shift in level of disclosure was a challenge, especially considering he was not out to his family:

> It's never been a thing in my family that we talk about our sexuality ... You just don't discuss [it]. It's just weird for me to tell them that I'm gay; I'm Mr Gay Japan; I'm going to Mr Gay World. They probably say, 'Okay, so why are you telling us now?' Even my sisters didn't talk about their sexuality.

A power imbalance, along with heteronormative structures, silenced and discouraged these individuals from accessing support and networks. When LGBT+ people do come out, they have to come to terms with the reality that they might not be taken seriously.

8.2.1.3 Lack of diverse representation of LGBT+ individuals

While stereotypes can be a useful starting point when describing a group norm (Adler, 2001), they become problematic if they are used to evaluate the characteristics of a specific individual. Hide did not neatly fit the image of a gay person propagated by mainstream media, and worried that his coming out would be met with confusion or disbelief:

> Because they've never had any chance to meet any of those LGBT. Only on TV; like a stereotype; like *onē*-type gay people. So, as soon as I come out, 'I'm gay,' then they would start like, 'Oh, you don't act like gay.'

As Mor Barak (2016) points out, people tend to perceive their in-group as heterogeneous, and the out-group as mostly homogeneous. Ken worked in manufacturing and had not told anyone in his workplace that he was assigned female at birth. He transitioned completely and updated his *koseki* to reflect this change before entering the company. Ken was also gay. Although he believed that his company was LGBT-friendly, Ken did not want to come out because he did not like the idea that everything about him would be viewed through the lens of his sexuality:

> For example, I like working out [at the gym]. If I coming out, they are thinking, 'He likes working out because he is gay.' But that is not true.

Although not related to sexuality, Mizuki experienced this same reductive tendency when her status as a *kikokushijo* (returnee) was revealed. Once recognised as part of a group, stereotypes associated with that group are applied to the individual. Making fun of queer characters was mentioned as a feature of mainstream television programming. Several interviewees alluded to the damaging and enduring legacy of *Homooda homo* (see chapter 5 section 5.3.6). Daiki first saw this character in elementary school and it was his first exposure to a depiction of a gay man. Seeing it again some 30 years later, he found it very insulting. While Daiki was disappointed in these comedians he felt that, overall, *onē tarento* were respected in the media.[6] He was also cognisant of the fact that "ordinary LGBT" remain underrepresented. Kazuki was cautiously optimistic about diversification of media representation of queer people. He brought up television personalities Ryucheru and Kazlaser:

> At first glance he [Ryucheru] looks like LGBT—especially gay or transvestite—but he married [a] woman and he is [a] father himself, but he hasn't changed his style. He [wears] make up and he will wear some "queer" clothes and he speaks out about that. I think he's one of the diversity of variation of onē *tarento* in Japan. And, do you know Kazlaser? Uh, blonde-haired comedian; he's always wearing red suit. He is not *onē tarento* at all, but he spoke out that he is bisexual and he's not making fun of that. He just told naturally, "Sometimes I love men and sometimes I love women". Even though he's comedian he didn't made fun of it; I was very surprised about that. There's so many *onē tarento* in Japan, so Ryucheru and Kazlaser [are] very small examples, but I think change is happening.

However, other interviewees like Airi expressed their concern that the proliferation of *onē tarento*[7] had led to the conflation of trans identities with *okama*, while queer women continued to be practically invisible in the media.

8.2.2 Outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion for LGBT employees

8.2.2.1 Psychological strain during social interactions

Arguably in most workplaces, there is some level of social interaction between individuals and their coworkers, their clients, or their superiors. Many of these interactions are opportunities to network and to access social capital. Defined by Lin (2001) as the "resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions" (p. 25), *social capital* can include an individual's wealth, power, and reputation. *Nomikai* ("drinking parties") represent a space where social capital can be accrued. However, in a setting where inhibitions are lowered and protocols around hierarchy become blurred, probing personal questions become a fixture of many *nomikai*. For queer individuals, when everyone is assumed heterosexual and cisgender, being asked questions about sex and relationships can compromise their comfort and safety. Individuals handle these situations in different ways. For Jun, a practicing lawyer, *nomikai* were psychologically detrimental:

> Every time I have the drinking meeting or something with my lawyers, I [am] fed up with three questions: 'Do you have girlfriend; don't you marry; are you gay?' Every time! And, I had a really difficult time in [the] workplace, at the same time. I thought, 'I'm nothing, I'm nowhere.' So I [attempted] suicide three years ago.

While such conversations could be an opportunity to question norms and promote diversity, Jun did not feel safe to engage, and elected to conceal his sexual identity. He was able to shield himself from potential discrimination, but his health and wellbeing were compromised. Research has established a link between concealing one's LGBT+ identity and negative health outcomes (see Sears & Mallory, 2011 for review; see also Jones & King, 2014). Psychological resources may have to be drawn upon in order to comply with a system of heteronormativity. Takeshi, for example, created hypothetical stories involving known screen actresses when asked questions about what kind of women he liked. Similarly, one of Mizuki's friends would refer to his partner as "she", substituting a fake girlfriend in place of his real boyfriend. According to Woods' (1994) typology of identity management strategies, both of these are considered *counterfeiting* (i.e., fabricating a false heterosexual identity). Meanwhile, Haru coped by laughing off the question or answering that "it's a secret": *avoidance* strategy (Wood, 1994). This kind of avoidance tactic could also be regarded as *gomakasu*, which is described by Lunsing (2001/2016) as "avoiding answering a question, ideally in a sophisticated and playful manner" (p. 221). For Haru, who did not feel comfortable lying and wished to be fully understood in his workplace, being asked personal questions had led to social withdrawal and a sense of isolation. Thus, access to social capital was forgone. In real terms, opportunities to bond with coworkers or even to be considered for a promotion are lost.

8.2.2.2 Taking on the "educator" role

Providing correct information about SOGI diversity was seen as a crucial component in the development of an inclusive workplace. Kazuki worked for one of the six nationwide television networks in Japan. Through his journalistic endeavours he was able to start opening up about his sexuality at work. This culminated in coming out to a group of almost 200 employees during an educational seminar on LGBT issues. Kazuki's work duties thereafter expanded. At the time of the interview, he was proof reading news stories that included LGBT-related content, ensuring that correct expressions were used when referring to the individuals involved. Ami also worked in media, and while she recognised that her company was supportive of LGBT+ employees in terms of policy, she lamented the lack of information available:

> …so, we don't really have LGBT lectures in our company. Some of us [employees] are really into, you know, LGBT rights or gender issues. But, some of them are just typical Japanese salarymen. So I suggested [to] my boss to have, kind of like a lecture thing.

Ami wanted her boss and her coworkers, beyond her core group, to become better educated in issues of SOGI diversity. Using a mixed-methods approach, Celik et al. (2012) found that, in the context of health care, diversity remained the sole responsibility of a small group of well-trained health professionals. This highlighted the need for mainstreaming diversity at all levels of the organization in order to bring about institutional changes. Airi, who was out in her place of work, decided to forgo using the identifiers she felt best described her (i.e., "bisexual", "pansexual", "queer") to avoid having to educate those who didn't understand: "I would much prefer to say I'm bi or I'm pan or I'm queer. But, a lot of the time people don't really get it. So I'll just say I'm lesbian, or I'll say I'm gay in English". People might also ask questions that are ill-informed, insensitive, or outright rude. Yuki, a graphic designer felt that, while she hadn't experienced any discrimination coming out as lesbian, she had noticed a shift when it came to boundaries:

> …things that are very common to me when I come out to like, new friends or new coworkers; it's always typical; guys ask questions like, 'So like, have you done it with a guy or have you done it with a woman; what's the difference?' You know, it just gets into very sexual conversation.

Recognising the distance that typically exists between men and women in Japanese society, Yuki wanted her coming out to be an opportunity to form relationships that closed that distance. Instead, she felt that coming out had led to people fetishising her sexual identity. As touched upon in chapter 5 (section 5.1.2), coming out as lesbian in Japan carries with it the possibility of pornographic explotation by heterosexual men (Kakefuda, 1992; Horie, 2008). When LGBT+ individuals come out, they have to navigate carefully how they present their identity, as well as the extent to which they are willing to educate others.

8.2.2.3 Selective disclosure of LGBT+ identity

A measurement of the level of disclosure across different life domains was described in section 8.1.1. Interviewees were on average less likely to be out to family members than friends; they were even less likely to be out at work. There were some notable exceptions to this trend, including Rin, who was assigned male at birth, and had been transitioning while maintaining a managerial position. Citing empirical evidence, Swann et al. (2004) contend that individuals intensify their efforts to verify their identity to others when they believe their identity is misconstrued. After coming out to her direct superior and to human resources, Rin felt that, in order to smooth work relations, it was important to disclose her gender identity to everyone in the workplace. This compelled her to send a mass email to about 200 people in the company. Other interviewees were out only to select coworkers or supervisors. For example, Yuki specified that she was out to four out of six of her coworkers, and not out to her boss. Although the intent of selective disclosure is to share personal information with some while simultaneously concealing it from others, individuals cannot be completely in control of the spread of information. Some interviewees were outed in the workplace. As Georgie revealed, outing may not necessarily be seen as an egregious act in the Japanese business context:

> Well, it's normal that I get introduced as the “gay one”… That will never happen in England; not that blatantly. Literally the moment I walk in the door: gay! But that's okay, because that's kind of how I get remembered, and that's how I can push my character forward …

Georgie turned what could be viewed as a violation of privacy into his strength, leveraging his sexuality to create a lasting impression with potential clients and collaborators. Each time an LGBT+ individual enters a new workplace, they have to make a whole host of decisions relating to the disclosure of their LGBT+ identity. Employing several identity management strategies concurrently across different work and non-work contexts could lead to what Ragins (2008) describes as *disclosure disconnects*, a state which may result in psychological stress and role incongruence.

8.3 LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort

The following three themes salient to the LGBT+ expatriate experience were derived from analysis of the data:

1. Constructing self-concept as an LGBT+ expatriate.
2. Perception of safety as an LGBT+ expatriate.
3. Navigating the disclosure decision within and outside the workplace.

As elucidated in chapter 7 (section 7.4.2), foreigner identity was found to moderate the relationship between perceived level of safety and disclosure decision; the "*gaijin* effect". Here, the first theme corresponds to the moderator variable; the second theme to the independent variable; and the third theme to the dependent variable. These results reflect the complexity and interrelatedness of the processes involved. Although structured as such in this paper, it is important to recognise that these processes are not phases of a linear model. Rather, they operate, consciously and subconsciously, in the daily lives of the participants. The subthemes impart the salient underlying mechanisms that drive these processes, and help to frame the similarities across participant experiences (see table 8.4).

Table 8.4 Major emergent themes and subthemes (LGBT+ expatriate individuals; *in vivo* categories are italicised)

Major Theme	Subthemes
Constructing self-concept as an LGBT+ expatriate	*If I were Japanese* Foreigner identity
Perception of safety as an LGBT+ expatriate	*Country comparison* Laws and policies
Navigating disclosure decision within and outside of the workplace	Selectively out *Taken seriously*

8.3.1 Constructing self-concept as an LGBT+ expatriate

8.3.1.1 If I were Japanese

By its very nature, expatriation marks a separation from the social structures and routines of the home country. This distancing is an opportunity for exploration of identity. Taken for granted assumptions are brought to the surface, and questions of self, outside of one's socialised context, can be examined. For an LGBT+ individual, it could be argued that discrimination plays a significant role in the construction of self-concept. Understanding how discrimination affects

LGBT+ individuals in workplace settings has been the crux of several studies (see Ozeren, 2014 for review). Similarly, understanding how discrimination manifested for LGBT+ expatriates was an important line of inquiry in this research. Interestingly, when some of the interviewees talked about experiences of discrimination, or more often than not a lack thereof, they would offer that their experience would be different if they were Japanese. For example, Leonardo believed that if he were born Japanese, being gay in Japan could have been “more tough”. Similarly, when David responded to the question about how he sees LGBT+ discrimination manifest in Japan, he concluded that, “I don't really get [discriminated against as an LGBT+ person] cause I'm a foreigner; I don't get the same treatment. If I was Japanese it would be different”. Discrimination based on invisible LGBT+ group membership was precluded by visible foreigner group membership. At work, Ashton had not disclosed his identity as a gay man. Not being Japanese meant that it was easier for him not to be out:

> …if I were Japanese I think the experience might be different. But here being a foreigner, the people are not really aggressive, I mean aggressive towards you … like even, you know, *senpai* and *kōhai* kind of things; people don't really apply that to me here … I'm never even worried that somebody would ask me the question directly, in the normal work setting.

Ashton felt that social structures that position individuals vis-à-vis others, such the *senpai kōhai kankei* (see section 2.2.1), did not apply to him, and he was consequently insulated from being asked directly about his sexuality.

8.3.1.2 Foreigner identity

As these examples show, participants tended to gravitate toward their foreigner group membership, rather than their LGBT+ group membership, when positioning themselves within Japanese society. The organisation of self has been conceptualised in different ways. The notion of *centrality* is useful here. Rosenberg (1979) views components of self, including social identities, as varying in the degree to which they are central or peripheral parts of self. Hence, a hierarchical structure forms. In Japan, Skye’s trans identity was subsumed under her foreigner identity:

> I don't really see myself as a trans person in Japanese society. I see myself as a foreigner in Japanese society. And I think that that's maybe an advantage perhaps? When people expect you to be weird, it's less stressful when you actually are.

Skye’s “weirdness” as a trans person is mediated by her “weirdness” as a foreigner. Cooley’s (1902) theory of *looking-glass self* posits that self-concepts are formed as a reflection of the responses and evaluations of others. This theory has been previously utilised as a theoretical framework in studies of ethnic minority groups (Moghaddam et al., 1994) and biracial individuals

(Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). For LGBT+ expatriates in Japan, it seems that the construction of a "looking-glass self" self-concept leads to the centrality of the foreigner identity. This is in line with Adler's (1987) qualitative study of 52 female expatriate managers in Asia. She noted that, against expectations, the primary descriptor of female expatriate managers was "*gaijin*", not "woman". The female expatriates were seen as foreigners who happen to be women, not as women who happen to be foreigners. Applying the same logic here, LGBT+ expatriates may be viewed as foreigners who happen to be queer, not as queer people who happen to be foreign. In fact, their queer identity may not be acknowledged at all, particularly if it is not readily visible.

8.3.2 Perception of safety as an LGBT+ expatriate

8.3.2.1 Country comparison

McNulty and Hutchings (2016) observe that countries in which LGBT+ identity is overshadowed by foreigner-status may be perceived as safer destinations for LGBT+ expatriates. It is important, however, to acknowledge that for the participants in the current inquiry, perceived level of safety was not a significant factor in their decision to expatriate to Japan. Rather, safety was contextualised through comparison of host and home countries. Discussion of safety most often centred on physical safety in public spaces. Renata, who was interviewed with her partner said, "I feel very comfortable. I mean we hold hands on the street. Sometimes we give a little kiss". In public, being the target of discrimination can be activated or avoided based on association. Ruth had a husband (apparently opposite-sex pairing) and a girlfriend (apparently same-sex pairing). When she was with her husband and read as "straight", she recognised this as privilege. Ruth's unique situation reveals an underlying, often unacknowledged, system of oppression, namely heterosexual privilege. When she was with her girlfriend, Ruth lost that privilege. She compared loss of privilege in host and home country contexts:

> Here in Japan the loss of privilege is just like, weird looks and people being like, 'Oh, that's one of those people.' But, in Texas, it's a little bit more violent; people can get in between you or yell at you or that sort of thing.

Other interviewees contrasted safety and acceptance. Michelle noted that she was cognisant of safety more so when she was with her girlfriend. She perceived the U.S. to be more accepting than Japan of a relationship between two women, while also acknowledging that Japan is a safer place than the U.S. for two women in a relationship. Similarly, Márcia compared Japan and Brazil in terms of LGBT+ acceptance: "I like Japan. It's a very safe place … compared to Brazil. Brazil is not so good now … in general I think people in Brazil they're accepting more." Again, safety and acceptance are differentiated. Finally, as David put it, "…it's not that living here [in Japan] is harder as a gay person, it's just more progressive in other places". Japan is not evaluated in isolation but in comparison to other countries.

8.3.2.2 Laws and policies

Safety was related to socio-cultural, micro-level interactions, as in the previous subtheme. Analysis of the data found that safety was also framed in terms of government or company macro- and meso-level laws and policies. When asked about her coming out experience, Michelle connected risk of expatriation with national law:

> And as far as work goes, I was very honest about my sexuality while I was interviewing just because I know it could have been a risk coming to Japan, since I'm from the U.S. and we have more rights and protections as LGBT individuals there compared to here.

Michelle went on to indicate that during the job seeking process she actively looked for companies in Japan that visibly supported LGBT+ rights. Being upfront about her bisexuality during the interview stage could be seen as another way to screen potential employers, in the same way that companies evaluate the suitability of potential employees. Japan remains the only G7 nation in which employees are not protected from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace (Mendos et al., 2020). At the time of seeking work in Japan, Michelle was living in the U.S. with her Japanese (national) partner. Uncertainty about how marriage would affect their move to Japan proved stressful. For LGBT+ expatriates, (lack of) legal rights could be a determining factor in country selection. Conversely, studies have found that the so-called "comfort factor" tends to override legal status when determining LGBT-friendly locations (McPhail & McNulty, 2015; McPhail et al., 2016). As Leonardo mused:

> Yeah, when it comes to something official and policy, and to be recognized as a couple or as a gay person, it sometimes can be difficult. But, on the other hand, you can have some other kind of freedom here [in Japan] that maybe you wouldn't have in other parts of the world.

Laws and policies, while certainly not airtight, are material and can be objectively compared between countries or between companies. Arguably, the feeling of freedom is much more subjective and can only be understood once expatriates have spent time in the host country.

8.3.3 Navigating disclosure decision within and outside the workplace

8.3.3.1 Selectively out

As discussed in the section 8.1, although none of the LGBT+ expatriates were out in all domains of their life, compared with the J cohort (M = 2.1), the E cohort were on average more out at work (M = 3.2). This lends credence to the idea that, centralising a foreigner identity and feeling less pressured by societal expectations, the expatriate participants felt safer to come out in the workplace than their Japanese counterparts. Of course, there are a number of other variables to consider, including internal (e.g., personality) and external (e.g., job industry) factors. Also, individuals may belong to multiple SOGI diverse groups. Ruth identified as bisexual, polyamorous, and genderfluid. At work, she was only open about her bisexuality:

> I definitely have different levels of disclosure about that because I really dislike questions about my marital status … I've gotten a lot of really rude questions around polyamory in the States, or expectations around what kind of person I am.[8] And so like, I would rather just avoid those all together here in Japan so I just don't [talk about it].

Ruth had decided not to disclose her relationship with her girlfriend at work. Similarly, though she signalled her gender fluidity by subverting gender roles through clothing, she was not ready to talk about it explicitly. Having a social media presence which is readily accessible by the public, or speaking in a public capacity, LGBT+ individuals have to make decisions about when and to what extent they deploy aspects of their identity. For example, when speaking in public, Ruth mentioned that she would actively deploy her bisexual identity only when the talk included LGBT+ content. For David, he was reticent to post information about his LGBT+ identity on Facebook as he worried it would be deemed “unprofessional”. The important point here is that no one is completely out or completely closeted all of the time.

8.3.3.2 Taken seriously

After the LGBT+ expatriate in Japan has come out, another hurdle may present itself, as revealed by the data: being taken seriously. David noted that since it is rare for people to be out in Japan, especially at work, when he has come out as gay, usually at *nomikai*, he has had to convince people that it was not a joke. The *NijiVoice 2018* survey (Nijiiro Diversity: CSG, 2019) indicated that only 32.5% of LGBT+ participants had come out to at least one person in the workplace (calculated average). In light of this, it stands to reason that coworkers and supervisors may not know how to receive this kind of information. David continued:

> I came out to my cofounder, the CEO of the company, I think three times before he actually believed me ... until that point I just thought it was, understood, because I was like, ‘I told you before.’ He was like, ‘I thought you were joking before.’

In this case, the CEO was supportive and he and David maintained smooth relations. In some cases however, interpreting what is meant as a sincere and vulnerable declaration as a joke could be extremely invalidating and dismissive, prompting the LGBT+ individual to backpedal in order to go along with the joke. Carlos described reactions to his coming out as bisexual: “There's that initial shock, because apparently I don't look like the type of guy that likes other guys.” Depending on the person, the schema of an LGBT+ individual may be very limited and based on stereotypes. When Skye first started wearing dresses to work, she was met by a senior staff member with laughter.Skye did not try to assign meaning to the laughter, but recognised that it, "...affected me emotionally to some extent". In Japan, *onē tarento*, seen as men who dress in women's clothes, remain a staple of the entertainment industry. *Onē tarento* and the image of an LGBT+ person have become conflated (McLelland, 2000). Not wanting to be stereotyped, and wanting to be taken seriously as a professional in their place of work, the LGBT+ expatriate might decide not to come out in Japan.

8.4 Discussion

8.4.1 Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort

An important contribution of this inquiry is the focus on the lived experience of LGBT+ employees in Japan, whereby the issue of workplace inclusion is recontextualised to consider the experiences of those who may be falling through the gaps. Developing an understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion for Japanese LGBT+ employees came out of the data analysis. In answering the first question (*why do Japanese LGBT+ employees feel excluded in their workplace?*), it became apparent that implicit norms and informal processes were the drivers of experiences of exclusion for LGBT+ employees. Heteronormativity, a lack of dialogue, and the perpetuation of stereotypes in mainstream media translated into mechanisms of exclusion that prevented full and equal participation in the workplace. The presence of an anti-discrimination policy is meaningless if employees, including LGBT+ employees, are unaware of it. The daily experiences of LGBT+ employees revealed the gap between formal organisational processes and workplace climate. Rin, who had been misgendered by her coworkers, felt that they were not educated enough to know that what they were doing amounted to harassment.[9] Lunsing (2001/2016) describes this as "discrimination in everyday life" (p. 220): a form of discrimination most people who transgress are not aware of. For the interviewees, passing remarks or actions that invalidated their LGBT+ identity, in other words microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007), characterised one aspect of exclusion experienced in the workplace. Heteronormativity and the institution of marriage have led to structural inequalities within companies that can hinder access to tangible resources such as benefits and intangible resources such as social capital for LGBT+ individuals. If marriage is the gateway to upward mobility within a company, then those who are unable or unwilling to get married may see their earning potential stymied.

There is a growing body of research investigating the so-called “marriage premium” (Antonovics & Town, 2004; Light, 2004) and more specifically the wage disparity between different SOGI diverse groups (Baumle & Poston, 2011; Mize, 2016). And while research in some countries indicates that lesbian women typically earn more than their heterosexual counterparts, and gay men less (see Klawitter, 2015 for meta-analysis), preliminary evidence from Japan shows that an earnings disadvantage exists across all LGBT+ cohorts (Hiramori, 2018). Family and educational structures play a role in explaining this earnings disadvantage, which are beyond the control of companies. However, companies can reassess the way in which they appraise employees. As Lunsing (2001/2016) argues, the sheer number of unmarried men makes it increasingly difficult and unprofitable for companies to base their hiring and promotion policies on marital status. For women, on the other hand, the expectation that they will get married and bear children, and in turn exit the labour force, persists. Statistically speaking, 46.9 per cent of married women left their job upon their first childbirth that occurred between 2010 and 2014 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2017). The result of this expectation is that companies are less willing to invest capital into women, a point raised by Yuki. Suffice it to say, creating opportunities for women in the workplace has remained the preoccupation of most diversity management efforts to date in Japan, leaving little room to consider other facets of diversity, a fact that was brought up by Yoshi. Many LGBT+ individuals in Japan are in committed relationships but have no framework, legal or otherwise, to validate and support these relationships. Kazuki and Georgie both expressed their wish to get married to their partners in Japan, and felt that they should have access to the same rights as heterosexual couples. Marriage equality in Japan, however, may not necessarily translate to a marriage premium for same-sex couples, as evidence from Canada and Sweden shows (Alden et al., 2015; Waite & Denier, 2015). Rather than defining the worth of employees based on the narrow and restrictive married/unmarried binary, companies should move toward the recognition of relationship structures outside of the traditional nuclear family model.

Further, while some companies are beginning to implement policies that are inclusive of more diverse relationship structures, employees may not necessarily feel confident or comfortable to access them. When seeking support, the individual must first disclose information about their LGBT+ identity. A culture of heteronormativity may silence LGBT+ employees not only in the workplace but also in non-workplace settings such as *nomikai*, which are one of the key spaces where private matters can be openly discussed. In these settings, heterosexist and cissexist language exclude queer individuals from the conversation. In a study of social cooperatives in Italy, the researchers found that a deep-rooted heterosexist culture normalised discriminatory practices such as silence, gossip, and derogatory comments (Priola et al., 2014). Openly gay at work, Shogo was the target of gossip. He delineated between the foreign staff who "don't care" and the Japanese staff who "talk about me behind my back". Analysis of the interview data suggested that the use of exclusionary language was not necessarily out of malicious intent but rather out of ignorance. As Rin contended, her coworkers just didn't know any better. Tomoko wondered if what Rin experienced constituted harassment, or if it was merely *mushinkei* (insensitive). Regardless, understanding the intent of the person who did an action or said something does not change the way those actions or words are perceived and felt by the target. As Airi enunciated:

> …even when someone's coming from a good place, benevolent discrimination is still discrimination. I get to decide what discrimination is … if I feel discriminated against you're not allowed to say, 'It was coming from a good place; It was not intended to be like that.'

A lack of correct knowledge of SOGI diversity, as well as a lack of mechanisms to facilitate safe and constructive dialogue, impedes the progress of more inclusive organisational cultures in Japan.

Answering the second question (*in what ways do experiences of exclusion influence Japanese LGBT+ employee attitudes, behaviours, and performance?*), patterns that arose from the data analysis included evidence of psychological strain in social settings, taking on the role of educator either willingly or reluctantly, and selective disclosure of LGBT+ identity. Participants were highly differentiated in terms of what identity management strategies they utilised and how their health and performance were affected. The notion that different workplace situational cues make certain identities more or less salient for an employee (Mor Barak, 2016), could be an important clue in understanding this differentiation. If an LGBT+ employee who is not out is frequently exposed to situations where their LGBT+ identity is brought into question, they have to constantly make decisions about whether or not to disclose, which could ultimately affect their health and performance. For example, being asked if they have a girlfriend/boyfriend, or being asked when they are getting married; these seemingly innocuous questions can be incredibly difficult to navigate. Coming out as a personal choice was a recurring theme in the interviews. As Shogo articulated, "It's okay to come out, but it's also okay not to come out". While coming out can be part of a wider political project in the public sphere, it can also be an intimate, private act. On the one hand, coming out has the potential to facilitate education and the dissemination of correct knowledge. On the other hand, the onus of responsibility to raise issues, to instigate change, and to create space and opportunities for more diverse representation, should not rest solely on

LGBT+ individuals. Coming out is an act of vulnerability, and if everyone participated in and shared vulnerability more evenly, perhaps true structural change could be facilitated.

As some of the interviewees did not even know if their company had any policies pertinent to LGBT+ individuals, it was clear that other types of support, beyond organisational support, were important to the participants. Studies of LGB (e.g., Huffman et al., 2008) and T (e.g., Law et al., 2011) employee populations found that support from coworkers and supervisors predicted job satisfaction and affective commitment. Education was found to be one of four actions that can be used to create change in organisations (Brooks & Edwards, 2009). As discussed above, out LGBT+ individuals or external consultants should not be held solely responsible for the dissemination of correct knowledge. Of course they can be a part of the process, as was the case with Kazuki and Ami. At the same time, just because someone has come out, that doesn't necessarily mean that they are willing to take on the role of educator. Further, education has to be more than just a checklist of dos and don'ts, as in harassment training, which can be seen as prescriptive and superficial, having little to no relation to actual workplace interactions. In their review of the literature on diversity training, Benschop et al. (2015) found that interventions that: do not address power; are not part of a larger organisational development effort; and do not adopt a more experiential approach are seldom effective in transforming the structure and culture of an organisation. By examining extant power structures, companies can begin to uncover the ways in which they are not meeting the needs of their diverse employee base. This could require the expertise of an external consultant, or could be instigated from within the organisation itself by working with the employees directly affected.

Having supportive policies in place or seeing positive LGBT+ representation in the workplace however, does not guarantee that an individual will decide to come out in the workplace. Indeed, as a review of 36 research studies found, perceptions of the workplace climate are more significantly related to an LGBT+ employee's satisfaction on the job than to their personal decision to come out (Badgett et al., 2013). Research investigating the antecedents of disclosure has considered various individual and contextual factors (e.g., Clair et al., 2005; Law et al., 2011; Ragins, 2008) as well as the role of trust as a potential moderating and mediating variable (Capell, 2016). The interviews revealed that the decision not to come out was motivated not just by a fear that there would be a change in a way they would be perceived, but also by a concern that the information would negatively impact others. For instance, Shogo expressed that, "if I come out, that could affect so many people's lives. Maybe, in good way, maybe in bad way; I don't know. So I don't want to take that risk". Participants felt that coming out could be perceived by others as selfish, burdensome, or obnoxious. For many, it was easier not to come out; not to stick out. It is important remember that the choice not to come out is not something everyone has access to. It is a privilege of those who are able to pass successfully. Ken identified as a man and was read by others as a man. He chose not to disclose that he was assigned female at birth. Rin identified as a woman but was read by others as a man. She decided to come out because the legitimacy of her subject position was at stake.

This inquiry showed that coming out in the workplace could have positive psychological outcomes. In a quantitative study of 952 LGB employees in Switzerland, Lloren & Parini (2017) found that being out at work was negatively related to employees' reporting of psychological health problems. In line with previous research (Ozeren, 2014; McFadden, 2015), they averred that employees that disclose their sexual orientation at work are able to reconcile their private and public identity and are thus less stressed and anxious about being outed. Indeed, concealing their sexuality was particularly stressful for Haru and Jun. At the same time, participants such as Daiki and Shin did not express any discomfort in concealing their sexuality at work. Overall, the disclosure decision process was found to be deeply personal and nuanced. Coming out represented an ongoing negotiation rather than an either/or position. Relatedly, an individual's LGBT+ identity being implicitly understood, compared to it being explicitly talked about, was a salient distinction uncovered by the data analysis. Being able to discuss one's LGBT+ identity openly shifted the relationship from one of silent tolerance to one of actual acknowledgement and respect. Many of the interviewees who had decided to come out in the workplace just wanted to be taken seriously, and have a part of their self-concept recognised and validated. Top management commitment has been empirically shown to be positively related to job satisfaction of gay and lesbian employees (Day & Schoenrade, 2000). Mizuki's employers being genuinely interested in learning about pansexuality, and the president of Rin's company vocally demonstrating his support, highlight the important role that top managers have to play in creating norms around diversity.

8.4.2 LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort

Far from temporary workers, most of the interviewees of the E cohort had established themselves in Japan. They had become proficient in the language, with intentions to stay long-term or at least for the foreseeable future. Ashton came to Japan with the ambition of climbing the corporate ladder. For Leonardo, Carlos, Petra, and Renata, Japan represented their dream destination. Motivations to live and work in Japan varied from person to person, in the same way that the opportunities and challenges they faced varied. Rather than seeing all expatriates as the same, distinguished by their foreigner identity, organisations in Japan need to be cognisant of the intersectional diversity, both visible and invisible, that exemplifies the global talent pool. Answering the first question (*how do LGBT+ expatriates reconcile their visible foreigner identity with their (in)visible LGBT+ identity?*), the LGBT+ expatriates perceived themselves and were perceived by others primarily as foreign. On the one hand, this meant that it was easier for some of the participants, such as Ashton, to conceal their LGBT+ identities in the workplace because they were not held to the same societal expectations as their Japanese counterparts. In their study, Sang et al. (2013) found that the intersections of ethnicity and gender did not necessarily translate into a double disadvantage in the participant's careers. Instead, their status as migrant female academics as "double outsiders" could also be viewed as a source of advantage. In the context of Japan, this could be best encapsulated in the concept of the "*gaijin* card".[10] Basically, those who are perceived as foreigners in Japan are assumed ignorant regarding appropriate modes of speech and behaviour, and are subsequently treated with more leniency and met with patience. "Playing the *gaijin* card" may be intentional or unintentional, and foreigners in Japan recognise that there are situations where their "foreignness" can be deployed to their advantage.

On the other hand, as Skye noted, subversive behaviour or (gender) nonconforming appearance was relegated to one's foreignness, not one's queerness. In this way, sexuality and gender become secondary or erased completely. As a musician, Skye also spoke about the prevalence of racial—not gender or sexuality related—discrimination when participating in paid gigs. Conversely, when dating, Skye felt fetishised as a white person by *gaisen*.[11] She went on to say: "I'm lucky to have experienced some racial prejudice in Japan. I consider that to be something that taught me something valuable. But I don't know what it's like to live as an oppressed race". This observation is important to the current discussion. In white majority countries such as England, white privilege is rendered invisible. White privilege is (re)produced in social institutions through systemic mechanisms (i.e., bureaucracy) and individual actions, and the superiority of white people is "natural" and unquestioned. In Japan, people who are white are a numerical minority, and form a part of the "foreign" population.[12] Because of her appearance, Skye was caught between being undesirable in one context (i.e., as a white musician), and being (overly) desired in another context (i.e., as a white romantic/sexual partner). In his phenomenological research of acculturation experiences in Korea and Japan, Froese (2010) captures this plurality, noting how westerners may be associated with superior knowledge and skills while simultaneously facing subtle forms of discrimination. Reflecting on his own experiences as a biracial person with a Korean mother and a German father, he also posits that if a person has already experienced (racial) discrimination in their home country, they may be better equipped to cope with discrimination faced in the host country. Thus, the degree of perceived discrimination depends on the migrant group (see also Gee et al., 2006). Skye's account highlights the fact that coming to Japan may be the first time a person who is white has to deal with feelings of discrimination based on their apparent ethnicity. Finally, when asked about what advice he might give an LGBT+ individual wanting to expatriate to Japan, David argued that learning about Japanese culture should take precedence over deciding how to present one's gender or sexuality. It is reasonable to suggest that, for LGBT+ individuals moving to Japan, their visible foreigner identity will supersede their (in)visible LGBT+ identity in their daily lives as expatriates.

Answering the second question (*how do LGBT+ expatriates assess the level of safety and inclusion of workplaces in the Japanese business context?*), safety and inclusion were found to be measured comparatively, whereby the home country became the standard by which the host country was assessed. There was a distinct separation of safety from inclusion. Safety was conceptualised as the freedom to express oneself and freedom from physical and verbal acts of violence in public. Meanwhile, inclusion was conceptualised as being recognised and accepted as LGBT+ in the workplace. Interviewees expressed that they considered Japan to be a safer country to be LGBT+, while simultaneously expressing that Japan was less accepting of SOGI diversity than their home countries. Because an LGBT+ identity isn't necessarily visible at all times, appearing to belong to the dominant, heteronormative group can automatically afford privilege to queer individuals. In some countries, heterosexual privilege could mean the difference between life and death. Six UN Member States impose the death penalty on consensual same-sex sexual acts (Mendos et al., 2020). In Japan, some interviewees talked about people they knew being fired because of their LGBT+ identity. These "horror stories" become part of the broader discourse around being LGBT+, and can influence perceptions of inclusion for LGBT+ expatriates. Knowing that job security is compromised based on LGBT+ group membership could be stressful for the individual, impacting their productivity and wellbeing in the workplace. While the participants felt physically safe in Japan, they did not necessarily feel psychologically safe.

Kahn (1990) describes psychological safety as "feeling able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career" (p. 708). David was open about his sexuality in his workplace, but deployed covering while at business functions or when meeting with clients. He did not want to be "super out" about his sexuality as he worried it could "sour a relationship". As Goffman (1963/1990) notes: "It is a fact that persons who are ready to admit possession of a stigma (in many cases because it is known about or immediately apparent) may nonetheless make great effort to keep the stigma from looming large … This process will be referred to as *covering*" (p. 125-126; emphasis in original). In his book titled *Covering*, Yoshino (2007) expresses that while he is not against all covering, he is against what he refers to as "coerced covering" (p. 92). In other words, an LGBT+ individual forgoes certain modes of expression such as dress or comportment because of the demands of another person. The question is: Was David being coerced into covering? From the interview at least, it seemed that David's business partners and clients were not explicitly telling him not to talk about his sexuality. David was being mindful of the environment that he was working in and covering of his own volition. On the one hand, not talking about SOGI diversity could be seen as a way to ensure smooth business relationships. On the other hand, lacking psychological safety, a fear to speak up or speak out about diversity, including LGBT-related issues, in business settings could mean that ideas or partnerships that bring organisational change or greater inclusion are forgone.

Meanwhile, Ashton noticed that information about and participation in LGBT-related activities was becoming more prominent in his workplace, as summarised in diversity reports. He talked about not feeling comfortable being on the "front line" supporting these initiatives. Instead, he saw himself as supporter from a "far distance", participating in company-disseminated surveys that included questions related to diversity. Research has considered job position as it relates to the disclosure decision. While some scholars (e.g., Ryan-Flood, 2004; McDermitt, 2006; Wright et al., 2006) have argued that people are less likely to come out in the lower level positions of the occupational hierarchy, others (e.g., Humphrey, 1999) have concluded that being located in the "upper echelons" impedes the coming out process. Citing Tim Cook's coming out story, Ashton wondered if he would be able to do the same once he became CEO of the company. He felt that once he had reached the limits of career growth he wouldn't have to worry about how information about his sexuality could affect promotion prospects. In both these examples, the participants worried that their job security and professionalism would be compromised. Heteroprofessionalism (Mizzi 2013, 2016) may hinder the development of key interpersonal relationships for LGBT+ individuals. People who are heterosexual and cisgender are able to talk openly about their relationships and families in business settings while maintaining a professional image. In fact, it might actually endear potential business partners and clients to them. People who are LGBT+, however, have to tread lightly and avoid talking about their relationships and families if they think it might cause offence to others. At the same time, attempts to withhold information or dodge questions may be interpreted as cold, aloof, or uncooperative. For most self-initiated expatriates who are LGBT+, their ability to stay in Japan depends on their employer sponsoring their visa. As there are no government-legislated anti-discrimination laws in place, this leaves LGBT+ expatriates particularly vulnerable. Their lives in Japan are at the discretion of employers and immigration.

Interviewees also discussed the issue of same-sex marriage. Not having a marriage recognised, and subsequently not having the option of applying for a dependent visa could pose a significant barrier to entry for many LGBT+ couples considering expatriation to Japan. Identity is managed both by self and by others, and how individuals are treated can be based on perceived, as well as actual, group membership. Organisations in Japan wishing to tap into the global talent pool should sensitise HR and recruitment channels to the possibility that they will encounter LGBT+ candidates that have unique legal circumstances to navigate as individuals or as part of a familial unit when expatriating to Japan. For example, hiring one half of a same-sex couple in a trailing spouse situation and then not having measures in place to assist with any visa challenges they might face could lead to a negative return on investment if the couple decides to, or is otherwise forced to leave. Having an up-to-date knowledge of legislation that directly or indirectly affects people who are LGBT+ could help inform policies and procedures, ensuring smooth recruitment and mitigating losses. A corporate website may be the first point of exposure an overseas applicant has to an organisation. In line with signaling theory (Spence, 1973), diversity statements, awards, and descriptions of LGBT-related events the company participants in that are readily accessible online may inform LGBT+ job applicants' assessments about organisational culture. Overseas hire candidates may be explicit about their LGBT+ identity at the earliest possible opportunity, as Michelle demonstrated. Recruiters should be prepared to respond sensitively, and should appreciate the gravity of the candidate's decision to disclose. Conversely, companies should recognise that LGBT+ expatriates may come out at any point after being hired, or may not come out at all.

The duplicity matrix developed by McPhail and Fisher (2015) presents an in/out dichotomy of the disclosure decisions of LGBT+ expatriates inside the organisation and outside the organisation. It articulates the various paradigms of identity management that LGBT+ expatriates navigate based on social or organisational acceptance. The data analysed in the present research shows that such a matrix is overly simplistic. Inside the workplace, some of the interviewees were out only to select coworkers or supervisors. Similarly, outside the workplace, they were selectively out to some or all of their friends or family members. Maintaining a workplace climate that assumes all employees are heterosexual and cisgender is erroneous at best, and damaging at worst. Outcomes that only serve heteronormative ways of life reinforce institutional structures of discrimination and erasure. Finally, a diverse customer base requires a diverse organisation. Not allowing space for disparate and fresh perspectives, including the perspectives of LGBT+ individuals, is a missed opportunity to better provide products and services that meet the needs of all potential customers. Organisations in Japan eager to remain attractive to global markets cannot afford to ignore SOGI diversity. Whether it is visible or not, the fact that every workplace has SOGI diversity is immutable. Rather than responding reactively to individuals who are willing and able to come out, companies need to take a proactive approach in fostering inclusive environments, not only for the sake of existing employees, but also for potential future employees. If the job seeker does not receive signals that the workplace values diversity and inclusion they may choose to look elsewhere. The implication for companies is that talent could be lost before it is even found.

Notes

1. On the 26th of December 2017, after 6 and a half years together, Masuhara and Higashi publicly announced on their blog that they had separated (Higashi & Masuhara, 2017). A day prior, the two had returned their partnership certificate.
2. The average age of the participants was 35. Everyone older than 35 was sorted into the “older” group, and everyone who was 35 or younger into the “younger” group.
3. These are the group labels chosen for the purpose of the research and are overly simplistic. They do not necessarily reflect how the participants self-identify.
4. In the media, *onē* came to replace the word *okama*, which carries a discriminatory nuance (Yanagisawa et al., 2016). Like the word faggot (or fag) in English, some people in the LGBT+ community find the word *okama* offensive, while others use it self-referentially and as an affectionate epithet among friends.
5. Since Yoshi’s *koseki* designates him female, and his partner is designated male, they could be legally married in Japan.
6. The interviewee explicitly mentioned *Matsuko Deluxe*, *Akihiro Miwa*, and *Carrousel Maki* as examples of *onē tarento*.
7. The use of the word *onē* by the media as problematic has been examined recently (“onē yobawari”, 2016).
8. Polyamory is the practice or desire of relationships involving more than two people (Mardell, 2016).
9. Misgendering is the intentional or unintentional act of referring to a person, relating to a person, or using language to describe a person that doesn’t align with their gender (Clements, 2017).
10. The “*gaijin* card”—a literal card that holders should carry on their person—is a colloquialism of the now defunct *gaikokujin tōroku shōmeisho* (“alien registration certificate”). This was replaced by the functionally identical *zairyū kādo* in 2012 under the Basic Residency Registration Act (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, n.d.). Special permanent residents such as Zainichi Koreans have a *tokubetsueijūsha shōmeisho* (“special permanent resident certificate”) instead of a *zairyū kādo*.
11. *Gaisen* is an abbreviation of *gaikokujin senmon* (lit. foreigner speciality) and refers to people who only want to date and/or have sex with (non-Asian) foreigners. Of course, it is also possible to encounter the opposite extreme on dating applications in Japan. For

example, the author has noted how some users explicitly state “[interested in meeting] Japanese only” on their profiles.

12. Of course, there are people (e.g., people of mixed heritage) who may be considered “white” based on their phenotypic expression that are of Japanese nationality. As already mentioned (see chapter 1 section 1.2.2), the Japanese census does not collect data on ethnic/racial diversity; instead the population is divided into Japanese nationality and foreign nationality.

Chapter 9 – Study 2: Method

9.1 Participants

9.1.1 Interviews

Between October 2019 and February 2020 five LGBT+ expatriate couples were recruited to participate in interviews. Age of participants ranged from 28 to 35 years old (*M* = 31 years; SD = 2.3). Four of the participants were cisgender women, and six were cisgender men. Regarding sexuality, six participants identified as gay, two participants identified as demisexual and bisexual, one participant identified as bisexual/pansexual, and one participant identified as questioning and demisexual/asexual/bisexual.[1] Length of relationship ranged from two and a half years to nine years (*M* = 6). Three of the couples were married in Australia, Argentina, and Austria respectively; they had all married within the last year. Participants' home countries were as follows: Argentina (*n* = 2); Austria (*n* = 2); Germany (*n* = 1); Italy (*n* = 1); New Zealand (*n* = 1); and USA (*n* = 3). Regarding status of residence, five of the participants held the engineer/specialist in humanities/international services (ESI) visa, and two held the designated activities visa; short-term stay, researcher, and intra-company transferee visas were held by remaining participants. Length of time residing in Japan ranged from half a year to 5 years (*M* = 1.7). Employment status included: Full-time (6), part-time (1), independent contractor (1), and unemployed (2). Most participants (*n* = 4) worked in corporate services for an average of 2 years. Highest level of education ranged from high school to doctorate, with most (*n* = 6) completing a bachelor's degree (or equivalent). Six of the participants had had previous expatriation experiences, and all but two had been to Japan before for business or leisure (see appendix J for more detailed information about interviewed LGBT+ expatriate couples).

9.1.2 Short-answer survey

Eight couples participated in the short-answer survey between May and July 2020. The participants were aged between 29 and 40 years old (*M* = 35 years; SD =3.6). Self-reported gender was as follow: non-binary (n = *1*); cisgender woman (n = *3*); and cisgender man (n = *12*). Regarding sexuality, the participants identified in the following ways: Queer/bisexual (*n* = 1); queer (*n* = 2); bisexual (*n* = 3); gay (*n* = 7); and heterosexual (*n* = 3). Length of relationship ranged from 5 years to 15 years (*M* = 9.5), and the couples had been married for an average of 4 years. Countries of marriage were France (*n* = 1), Germany (*n* = 1), the Netherlands (*n* = 1), and the USA (*n* = 5). One couple had a dependent child accompanying them. Ten of the participants were from the USA, two were from Germany, and the remainder were from the Netherlands, Australia, France, and Luxembourg. Status of residence varied as follows: Designated activities (n = 3); ESI (n = 6); instructor (n = 1); dependent (n = 3); intra-company transferee (n = 1); and professor (n = 1). Average length of time residing in Japan was one and half years (SD = 1.2); eight couples had been in Japan for less than a year. Two of the participants were unemployed, two were self-employed, two were employed part-time, and ten were employed on a full-time basis. They were employed in a number of industries including education, pharmaceuticals, real estate, and IT, for an average of four and a half years. All participants had completed high school, the majority (n = 6) having obtained a bachelor's degree; six participants had Masters (or equivalent) and one had a PhD. Twelve participants had had previous expatriation experiences, and 14 had been to Japan before for business or leisure (for more detailed information about the LGBT+ expatriate couples who participated in the short-answer survey, see appendix K).

9.1.3 Lawyers

Two lawyers, Wakui Noriko and Alexander Dmitrenko (see appendix L for introduction to lawyers) were interviewed in May and October of 2019 respectively. A third lawyer corresponded via email, providing useful information regarding the designated activities visa. They did not want to participate in this research, and will not be named here.

9.2 Data collection

9.2.1 Interview Protocol

As in Study 1, a semi-structured interview served as the starting point of Study 2. The focus shifted from identity management and workplace experiences to the expatriation process and the dynamic of the couple. In order to understand the phenomena pertinent to the couples' expatriation experience, interviews began with a set of four inter-related core questions regarding expatriation:

1. What have you found challenging as a couple?
2. What have you found challenging as an individual?
3. What have you found rewarding as a couple?
4. What have you found rewarding and as an individual?

For each question the interviewees were given five minutes to write down up to three responses. They would read their responses aloud in turn, elaborate as necessary, and then group discussion would commence. In this way, the exercise allowed the participants a moment of introspection. Rather than being reactionary towards or prompted by the answers of their partners, they could develop answers privately without influence.[2] The remainder of the interview was very loosely structured, and the interview protocol was used to bring the discussion back on topic (see appendix M for LGBT+ expatriate couples interview protocol questions). Again, the author in their role as interviewer was vulnerable and empathetic, relating personal experiences as an expatriate in Japan with an expatriate partner. In regards to the interview process, one interviewee (Grace) had the following feedback:

> I was going to say when you were thanking us about talking about our experiences, I think there's definitely something to be said about the level of comfort that we feel of like, our words and what we say being safe in your hands, and knowing that you will understand, or at least also attempt to understand, because there's something to be said for that effort. I mean I do believe that you are truly listening and not trying to fit it into some narrative that you're already trying to spread. But, I do think there's still something to be said by your attempts to really try to give that voice, the correct voice, right?

It was important to cultivate a space that felt safe for everyone involved. Throughout the research process "not trying to fit [the interviewee's experience] into some narrative" was of key concern. The tension between having a research agenda and remaining open to the unexpected as a researcher is a part of the grounded theory approach.

9.2.2 Short-answer survey

After interviewing five couples, qualitative data on expatriate couples in Japan continued to be gathered utilising a different method for collection. The most challenging aspect of the interview process proved to be scheduling. Other couples had expressed interest in participating in the research, but were unable to make time to meet. Therefore, a survey was created using Google Forms that was easy to access and captured the essence of the interviews that had already been conducted. This turned out to be especially timely given the developments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; the government declared a state of emergency in Tokyo on the 7th of April (Cabinet Public Relations Office, 2020). Since the survey could be accessed online, participants could complete it in their own time and, more importantly, safely at home. The survey consisted of two types of response field: short-answer text; and multiple -choice. Multiple choice was used mainly for questions requiring a "yes" or "no" answer. The other two items utilising multiple choice were: "Level of Japanese proficiency—basic; intermediate; conversational; business professional; fluent/native"; and, in response the question regarding employment in Japan, "If yes, were you a local hire, or overseas hire?—Local hire (hired while residing in Japan); Overseas hire (hired while residing in home country/3rd country)". All other items had a blank field where participants could respond in as many or as few words as they desired; hence, short-answer survey. The through line connecting the interview and survey was the same set of four core questions about what participants found challenging and rewarding with regards to the expatriation process. These questions acted as the foundation upon which the survey was built. Based on analysis of the interview data, questions about the visa process were also included, as this was revealed to be salient to the expatriation experience.

In total, the survey consisted of 62 items that examined the following: participant's background (e.g. age, gender, sexuality, marital history, children, occupation, education, visa status); details of expatriation (e.g., previous expatriation experience, reasons for expatriating, intended length of expatriation); details of visa process (e.g., use of lawyer, employer support); experiences of discrimination (on the basis of relationship, sexuality, and gender); and overall expatriation experience (e.g., what has been challenging and rewarding, advice for others, useful information; see appendix N for select short-answer survey questions).[3] As with the interview protocol, short-answer survey questions were modified or added as necessary, and also in response to feedback from the participants. For example, one participant expressed that their company had helped them secure their child's visa, but not their partner's. This was an important distinction that otherwise would not have been captured by the existing items. Being able to respond dynamically and implement change swiftly was a clear advantage of the online survey format.

9.3 Procedure

9.3.1 Interviews

A mutual friend introduced one couple, and the other four couples were recruited directly, mostly through the use of social media. In September 2019, dialogue with the first couple commenced, and the second couple was recruited through a gay social app called Scruff. The couples were interviewed in October and December respectively. In November, one of the couples was recruited at a social gathering, and was subsequently interviewed in December. In January 2020, after being granted permission from the group admins, a call for same-sex (queer) expatriate couple interviewees was posted in the following Facebook groups: Stonewall Japan (posted 31st January) (then 3500 members); Fruits in Suits Tokyo (posted 12th January) (then 1500 members); and Tokyo Expat Network (posted 15th January; then 26,000 members). After a short preamble about the research purpose, three screening criteria were listed:

1. Both individuals expatriated to Japan together (doesn't have to be at the exact same time, but the idea is that the individuals were already a unit before getting to Japan);
2. Both individuals are still living in Japan; and
3. Be available for interview within greater Tokyo area.

People who were interested could email or message the author directly over Facebook. The resulting response yielded two more couples that were interviewed in January and February respectively. One couple (Selena and Elsa) did not meet the all items of the screening criteria; in fact, they had first met in Japan. Ultimately, they were interviewed because a) perspectives from people other than white, cis-men were sorely lacking in the research, and b) they were willing to share their struggles with the visa process. Additionally, one of the participants shared the contact information of the lawyer they had worked with to prepare and submit their visa application. Through this reference, Wakui Noriko, representing Nakai Immigration Services LPC, was interviewed.

In all cases the interviewees decided on the date, time, and location of the interview. Three interviews were conducted in cafés, and two were conducted in the couple's place of residence. All interviews were conducted in English. Participants were given an informed consent statement to read and sign before the interview commenced. Interviews were audio recorded and lasted between 95 and 193 minutes. Interviews with lawyers Wakui Noriko and Alexander Dmitrenko were conducted utilising online video communications software and lasted 55 minutes and 33 minutes respectfully. The interview with Noriko was conducted over Google Meet, and the interview with Alexander over Microsoft Teams (see appendix O for example of interview protocol for lawyers).

9.3.2 Short-answer survey

The call for interview participants on Facebook generated further expressions of interest. These individuals were invited to participate in the short-answer survey. Upon further inquiry, one individual, Alexander Dmitrenko, was in a relationship with a Japanese national. He was instead interviewed in his capacity as co-representative director of Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network. Two same-sex couples completed the survey in May. After this, the target of the survey was expanded to include expatriate couples with or without accompanying children and of any gender/sexuality configuration. A call for survey participants was posted on Stonewall Japan, Fruits in Suits Tokyo, and Tokyo Expat Network twice in June, and once in July. The screening criteria were almost identical for the survey as they were for the interview:

1. Both individuals are able to complete the survey (i.e., one person does not complete the survey on behalf of the couple);
2. Both individuals expatriated to Japan together (doesn't have to be at the exact same time, but the idea is that the individuals were already a unit before getting to Japan); and
3. Both individuals are currently residing/working in Tokyo (including Greater Tokyo Area).

The first call yielded four couples, the second call yielded one couple, and the final call yielded one couple. The individual who contacted the author with their expression of interest was sent a link to the survey and given a unique four-digit code to input at the top of the survey so each expatriate couple pair could be easily identifiable. They were told to share the link and the code with their partner, and were encouraged to ask questions if they had any concerns or needed clarification. The survey was created in and made available through Google Forms, and participants could access and complete it without submitting any identifying information, including email address. The introductory statement described the purpose, voluntary nature, and security measures of the survey. After completing the survey, participants were contacted for a follow-up. They were thanked for their time and involvement, and clarification in regards to their answers was sought where necessary. For example, there were two instances where arrival date to Japan did not match. In one case, this was accurate, in the other case, this was an error; the couple had in fact arrived in Japan at the same time.

9.4 Data Analysis

9.4.1 Preparing the data for coding

For the interviews, just over 11 hours of audio-recording was produced. The process of transcribing the recordings was almost identical to that of Study 1. One major difference was that Spext, the browser-based auto-translation app, was not used in Study 2. An update had rendered it quite unwieldy, the audio no longer syncing up to the text. Instead, all interview recordings were transcribed manually. For the short-answer survey, the two types of data generated were socio-demographic data and phenomenological data. The socio-demographic data was tabulated in an Excel spread sheet that was transformed for use in this thesis (appendix K). The responses each paired couple had submitted were collated into a Word document for coding. The data corpus comprised 164 pages of transcripts and 27 pages of responses to the short-answer survey, including follow-up texts with participants via email, Facebook or Instagram messenger. All participants, except for the lawyers, were assigned pseudonyms.

9.4.2 Coding

The same coding process from Study 1 was used to analyse the transcripts and survey responses of the LGBT+ expatriate couples: line-by-line coding, focused coding, and hierarchical sorting culminated in the elucidation of major themes. Again, this did not unfold in a linear manner; the data was treated at various levels of abstraction throughout the analysis. In addition, the set of four core questions were subjected to a second, novel method of analysis. The questions generated a total of 305 responses across the interviews and short-answer survey; perfect response rate was 98 per cent.[4] Each response was coded and tabulated under "challenging couple", "rewarding couple", "challenging individual", and "rewarding individual" in an Excel spread sheet. Then, the codes were sorted into different categories. Category labels were a mix of *in vivo* codes and names that best fit the information, and a total of 25 categories were able to describe all of the codes. These 25 categories were subsequently sorted into the following six themes, elaborated upon as follows:

- **Sexuality**—How the expatriate couple's sexuality was presented to and received by others;
- **Relationship**—How the expatriate couple's relationship dynamic was affected by the move;
- **Adjustment**—How the expatriate couple adapted to everyday life and work settings;
- **Connection**—How the expatriate couple connected with place and people;
- **Law**—How the expatriate couple navigated and was designated by the legal system; and
- **Self**—How the expatriate couple grew and actualised as individuals in Japan.

Table 9.1 displays the distribution of categories across these six themes.

The purpose of the four core questions was to understand what the expatriate couples in the sample had found challenging and rewarding about their time living and working in Japan. At this stage, the spread of the data across "challenging" and "rewarding" was determined both by frequency and by representation for each theme. For example, the theme sexuality included three categories: "PDA (public displays of affection)"; "coming out"; and "reaction from others". For the category *PDA*, there was one code in "challenging couple" and one code in "rewarding couple". The category *coming out* included five codes in "challenging couple" and two codes in "challenging individual". The category *reaction from others* had the following spread: "challenging couple" = 1; "rewarding couple" = 7; and "rewarding individual" = 1. By frequency, there were nine codes in "challenging" and nine codes in "rewarding". By representation, "challenging couple/individual" was represented by four categories, and "rewarding couple/individual" was

Table 9.1 Themes and categories abstracted from analysis of the four core questions (aggregate)

Theme	Category (number of codes)				Total
Sexuality	PDA (2)	Coming out (7)	Reaction from others (9)		18
Relationship	**Testing bonds (19)**	Support each other (8)	Money (4)	Finding job (8)	39
Adjustment	**Adapt (15)**	**Language (23)**	**Daily life (38)**	**Quality of life (13)**	127
	Work environment (10)	Housing (4)	**Attitudes (17)**	Safety (7)	
Connection	**Making connections (28)**	Away from home (8)	**Culture (13)**	**Travel (13)**	63
Law	Rights (8)	**Visa (15)**			23
Self	Foreigner status (8)	**Personal growth (12)**	**Professional opportunities (12)**	Goals (3)	35
				Total	305

represented by three categories. Therefore, looking at the aggregate, the theme of sexuality was 50 per cent challenging and 50 per cent rewarding by frequency, or otherwise 57 per cent challenging and 43 per cent rewarding by representation. The same calculations were run for the following variables: challenging/rewarding for couple; challenging/rewarding for individual; same-sex couples; and opposite-sex couples. By integrating the data in this way, it could be determined where each of these themes sat on the challenging-rewarding continuum.

9.5 Emergent theory

9.5.1 The challenging-rewarding continuum

In order to efficiently and succinctly communicate information about the extent to which the expatriate couples' experience was challenging or rewarding across the themes that emerged from the data, the *challenging-rewarding continuum* was devised. This visual model anchored the six themes on a scale. Where the themes fell on the scale was determined by the ratio of challenging to rewarding; the mid-point of the continuum is 50 per cent, and at either end are 100 per cent challenging and 100 per cent rewarding. Figure 9.1 below shows the distribution of themes by frequency. Made up of the categories "rights" and "visa", the theme *law* was 91 per cent challenging, and 9 per cent rewarding. In other words, there were 21 instances where the respondents answered that a law-related experience, such as being recognised as a couple or

Figure 9.1 The challenging-rewarding continuum (aggregate by frequency)

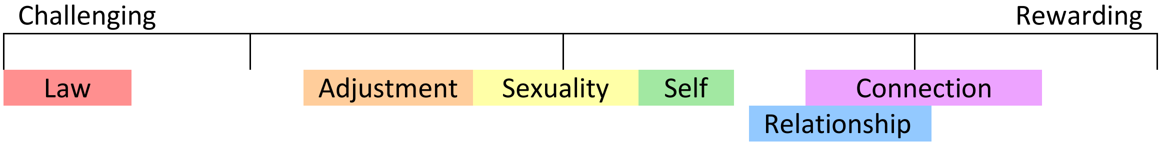
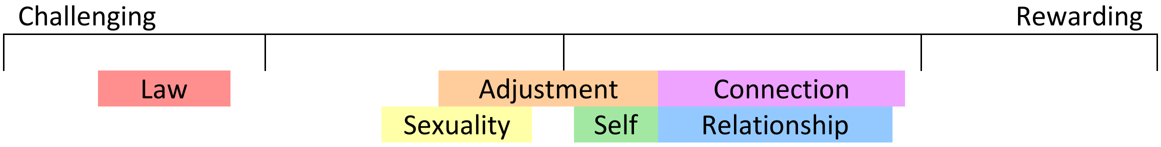


Figure 9.2 The challenging-rewarding continuum (aggregate by representation)



obtaining a visa, was challenging for them, and two responses where a law-related experience was rewarding. At the other end of the scale, the theme *connection* was 75 per cent rewarding, and 25 per cent challenging. Looking at the distribution of themes by representation (see figure 9.2), it can be seen that the relative positions of the six themes are almost the same. Relative positions of the six themes also remained stable across all the variables considered: challenging-rewarding for couple; for individual; for same-sex couples; and for opposite-sex couples.

The theme *law* was always positioned as most challenging, and the themes *connection* and *relationship* most often vied for the position of most rewarding. In fact, when only seven of the thirteen expatriate couples had participated, these same positions were reflected in the challenging-rewarding continuum developed at that time. Recognising this, it can be said with some confidence that the challenging-rewarding continuum is a relatively stable construct comprised of themes that have reached theoretical saturation (i.e., gathering more data will not spark new insights nor reveal new properties of core theoretical categories) (Charmaz, 2006). This has important implications for companies in Japan employing talent from overseas. Being able to anticipate and address challenges ahead of time, while also facilitating the ways in which LGBT+ expatriate couples and families can maximise the potential rewards of living in Japan, companies can better support foreign employees before, during, and after the expatriation process.

9.5.2 Questions that arose from the data

While this novel method of analysis resulted in the emergence of stable themes with utility in a theoretical model, there was a wealth of rich data providing insights into the experiences of the expatriate couples beyond the four core questions. The interview and short-answer survey data described the expatriate couple's experience as a short- to mid-term endeavour. In the interviews especially, it became apparent that the participants were highly cognisant of their own temporariness, unable to see a future in Japan. This was in stark contrast to the LGBT+ expatriate individuals interviewed in Study 1, many of whom talked about making their dreams of cultivating a life in Japan a reality. Additionally, the expatriation experience was punctured by points of rejection and points of connection. Feeling rejected, the couple may in turn begin to reject the host country, potentially triggering a downward spiral. Understanding where and how these points of rejection and connection could surface for expatriate couples should be of considerable concern for companies hiring overseas talent. By intercepting and addressing experiences of rejection, and facilitating opportunities for connection, companies have the ability to provide support at every step of the expatriation process. Taken together, the data prompted the following questions:

a. Why can't LGBT+ expatriate couples see a future in Japan and how does a mindset of temporariness influence the expatriate experience?
b. How can LGBT+ expatriate couples break the cycle of rejection and what kinds of support are important for expatriate couples in Japan?

In order to answer these questions, the next chapter will introduce and elaborate on the major themes that came out of the grounded theory analysis.

Notes

1. "Demisexual: a person who only experiences sexual attraction to people with whom they have formed a strong emotional bond" (Mardell, 2016, p. 8).
2. For two of the couples, these questions were administered post-interview. In follow-up emails they were asked to answer the questions separately, and submit their completed responses in a return email.
3. When it was first launched, the short-answer survey consisted of 42 items, with additional items added incrementally; in particular, items examining discrimination experience. Only five of the participants answered all 62 items of the most current iteration of the survey. As such, results from some items are not reported here.
4. Here "perfect response rate" indicates that the respondent gave three distinct answers for each of the four core questions, resulting in a total of twelve answers

Chapter 10 – Study 2: Findings

10.1 LGBT+ expatriate couples cohort

Abstracted from the data were two themes salient to the experiences of the expatriate couples sampled in the research:

1. Navigating the expatriate experience with a mindset of temporariness; and
2. Facing points of rejections and points of connection as an LGBT+ expatriate couple.

Conscious of their own impermanence, the first theme describes the participants' positioning of their expatriation to Japan as something fleeting. The time-related language deployed by the participants when reflecting on their experiences of preparation for and arrival to Japan, as well as when discussing their seemingly inevitable departure, proved to be a site of rich phenomenological insight. The second theme relates to the multifarious points of rejection and connection the couples faced during the expatriation process. Both rejection and connection were seen as something that participants could actively participate in and contribute to or something that happened unexpectedly, so determining the locus of agency was important. Again, the subthemes serve as an anchor point for the data, providing a framework for the discussion to develop around (see table 10.1).

Table 10.1 Major emergent themes and subthemes (LGBT+ expatriate couples; *in vivo* categories are italicised)

Major Theme	Subthemes
Navigating the expatriate experience with a mindset of temporariness	Putting Japan in the past Living in the present *No future in Japan*
Facing points of rejection and points of connection as an LGBT+ expatriate couple	*Making connections* Cycle of rejection *Support*

10.1.1 Navigating the expatriate experience with a mindset of temporariness

10.1.1.1 Putting Japan in the past

When asked about what they thought Japan could do better to facilitate expatriate couples, both Olena and Dirk wrote recognition of relationships outside of marriage (e.g., civil unions) as one of their answers. Seeking clarification in a follow-up text via Facebook, Olena expressed that:

> Originally [neither] of us wanted to get married as we don't believe in that concept. Also in Europe there is contractual form of civil unions. Yet, to come to Japan together we had to marry. As heterosexual couple we had that option, while it is not the case for the same-gender couples. So it is personal on one hand and a point for progress on other; this will facilitate diversity. This is one of points where Japan is very conservative (another example - definition of the head of household; we had to fight to make me the head). Somehow you arrive in developed country, but it feels like a time travel back in 80s.

Partnership recognition is something that affects both same-sex couples and opposite-sex couples, albeit in different ways, as Olena pointed out. Noriko—immigration attorney for Nakai Immigration Services LPC—explained that in Japan a marriage certificate is required for a heterosexual couple to apply for the dependent visa, and for a same-sex couple to apply for the designated activities (DA) visa. Noriko was aware of the fact that couples are increasingly choosing not to get married. She related the importance of marriage in Japan as being tied to *sōzokuhō* (inheritance law), again reiterating the notion brought up in Study 1 that marriage is a matter of family. Brendan and his husband Seth had different surnames. This was deemed problematic when they came to Japan. Similarly, Olena had to "fight to make [her] the head [of household]". As discussed in chapter 5 (section 5.3.1), the head of household is typically male, and a dual-surname system is not recognised in Japan. Both of these couples present configurations contrary to the established standard, resulting in struggle when interfacing with the bureaucratic process.

Olena's last line is very telling of an enduring attitude around progress, especially when it comes to LGBT+ issues. News articles position Japan as "lagging behind" other developed nations (see for example Ripley, 2015; Imahashi, 2019; McKirdy, 2020). As with the LGBT+ expatriate individuals, country comparison was the lens through which Japan was assessed. Here, rather than simply acknowledging that Japan has different laws, attitudes, and norms around marriage and family, for instance, the expatriate couples instead compared Japan to their own countries, rendering Japan as being "stuck in the past", or even "backwards". In this way, Japan was temporally situated in the past of other, mostly developed, countries, its own historicity stripped away. During his time as a volunteer interpreter for OCCUR, Vincent (2010) recalls regularly encountering this sentiment when attending overseas conferences. For Vincent, two problematic assumptions arise: 1) the notion that identity categories such as "lesbian" and "bisexual" are transhistorical and universal and; and 2) the idea that their absence in any given cultural context is to be explained in terms of a temporal logic of belatedness rather than cultural and historical difference. In other words, progress, assumed to be universal, can, within any given society, be mapped as points along a single "correct" trajectory. This kind of casual ethnocentrism was problematic when it came to the expectations of the expatriating couples. When the couples believed that Japan, as a "developed" nation, should be as "progressive" as their home country, they often found themselves feeling frustrated by the differences that they found.

10.1.1.2 Living in the present

Expectation management played a role in the expatriate couple's experience. For Tobias and Wolfgang, living abroad was not something they had ever planned to do. When Tobias floated the idea, the timing seemed right, so they went for it. Tobias explained how he believed a mindset of temporariness would help them make the most of their time in Japan:

> I think it depends on your mindset, how you come here and what you expect from it. Because for us it was more like a, not an adventure, but getting a change in life for a limited time … So I think since we came with this mindset of having these three years, we might be able to enjoy it more, to be more active and see more.

Wolfgang's company provided the couple with pre-departure intercultural training. Tobias felt that they were well prepared because of the training, and that overall their expectations where met in regards to cultural differences, with some positive surprises. In a study of 73 expatriates, Caligiuri et al. (2001) found that the less relevant the training, the more expatriates assumed the global assignment was going to be easy, and vice versa. Cross-cultural adjustment was positively affected when the expectations created either an accurate reality or a "nice surprise" when it was not as difficult as the expatriates thought it would be. In Tobias and Wolfgang's case, the training was catered toward them as a couple expatriating to Japan; it was just the two of them and the trainer. Queried about whether or not the trainer had provided any information about what the situation was like for LGBT+ people in Japan, they answered that the trainer said that there wasn't a lot of information available: that there had never been any religious or legal persecution of LGBT+ people; and that since it is important to "stick to the majority", being gay might be frowned upon more so because it is seen as different. To that, Tobias said that since they were foreigners, they were already different, so being gay was secondary.

For the expatriate couples, living in the present meant taking a risk, leaving a comfortable, predictable life at home behind for the veritable unknown. Coming to Japan was a "now or never" opportunity for Lionel. He and Sebastian both had good jobs and supportive families in Argentina. Lionel came to Japan on a 90-day visa, and while they were waiting for his DA visa to be processed they contemplated the very real possibility that the application would be rejected. Sebastian felt that pursuing an attitude of "enjoy it while it lasts" helped to move through the stress of waiting, shifting the focus away from potential future outcomes and toward the present moment in time. Five other couples sampled went down the DA visa route. There was no guarantee that the application for the DA visa would be successful, only reassurances from the lawyers that they worked with. When processing a visa application, the department responsible takes into account the company the individual or couple is employed under, Noriko explained. Using metrics such as number of employees and if they trade publicly on the stock market, companies are ordered hierarchically. The basic premise is: the higher the company is ranked, the shorter the visa processing time. The couples were willing to move their lives overseas—no simple feat—despite facing up to several months of uncertainty.

10.1.1.3 No future in Japan

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, compared with the LGBT+ expatriate individuals, a much more pronounced sense of temporality shrouded the interviews with the LGBT+ expatriate couples. A lack of opportunities for professional development, and for the same-sex couples in particular, an inability to get married or have their marriage recognised, as well as perceived barriers to adopting and raising children, were cited as the main reasons expatriate couples did not see a future in Japan. It seemed that from the outset most couples had already made up their minds about how long they wanted to stay in Japan. For example, Amando had received an eight year contract doing postdoctoral research at a prestigious research institute. Despite this, he said he would only want to live in Japan for a couple of years. In the end, after waiting almost four months for Nathan's DA visa to be processed, only to find out the application had been rejected, they decided that they were not prepared to go through the process again; the immigration office did not encourage them to reapply. Amando spoke about his boss's emphatic reaction to the news, and her willingness to advocate for them:

> So, I think that when this whole thing happened she wanted to fight. And I said to her, 'I'm very touched that you want to fight, but this is not our fight.' You know what I mean? It's just that, I said to Nathan, 'I know that I will never stay here for the rest of my life.'

Recognising that they would not live in Japan permanently, fighting for their right to stay was not seen as a reasonable thing for them to invest time in. This sentiment was also expressed by Grace: "I don't want to be an advocate for gay rights for foreigners in Japan". Of course, things change, and couples could end up staying longer than planned. Grace said that she and Sarah had only expected to be in Japan for one or two years. At the time of the interview, they were moving into their fifth year, and were contemplating marriage and children. They felt that Japan would not be a viable place for them to embark on the next chapter of their lives together. This feeling was echoed by Wolfgang: "… I think there is no future in Japan, because I do want to have kids at some point, and I think this will not be able to get kids here in Japan as gay couple, foreigners." Many of the couples treated expatriation as an adventure, with the expectation that they would eventually settle down in their home country. Only one couple who were parents, expatriating with their two year old daughter, was sampled in this research.

Regarding employment, the most common configuration observed was that one individual came to Japan with a job that had either been offered to them or that they themselves had pursued, while their partner found a job in Japan and worked part-time, was self-employed, or was unemployed; the so-called "trailing spouse". In traditional expatriate research, overwhelmingly, men are the primary bread-winners while women are the trailing spouses (see for example Harvey, 1985; Caligiuri, 1997). In this research, in all cases the trailing spouse was a cisgender man in either a same-sex or an opposite-sex relationship. Part of being a trailing spouse was "making sacrifices". Nathan talked about how he gave up his career to move to Japan. Meanwhile, Tobias was working part-time, and while he was grateful to be employed, he felt he could not "unfold professionally in Japan". He was interested in pursuing a career in corporate communications but felt business level Japanese ability was required, which he did not feel he possessed. Even for those with high-level Japanese language ability, there was an apparent ceiling they could not break through.

Sarah and Grace, who worked for the same company, could not see any way to advance their careers after 4 years in the same position, and felt dehumanised in their workplace. Joanna, who came to Japan with the intent of speeding up her promotion path, said that she faced sexism and racism in her workplace, and felt that she wasn't being heard. At the time of the interview, she was waiting for a lateral transfer to a firm outside of Japan to be approved. Ruth called for a clear process for leadership of foreigners, and worried that if she stopped growing in her job, she and her husband would have to leave Japan. In an interview with the CEO of Fourth Valley Concierge Corp. Shibasaki Yohei, the *nenkō joretsu* (system of advancement based on seniority) of traditional Japanese firms was contrasted with the performance-based advancements systems of western firms as something that may prove frustrating to ambitious workers who want to quickly climb the corporate ladder (Muntal, 2020). Shibasaki also mentioned that Japan is not well placed to attract western workers due to its inability to offer competitive wages. A recent survey found that Japanese nationals based overseas earned an average gross personal income of USD 166,000 while expatriates who have moved to Japan earned an average of USD 127,000 (HSBC, 2017, p.

18).[1] Not being paid enough was one of the things Brendan flagged when asked why he was ready to leave Japan.

10.1.2 Facing points of rejections and points of connection as an expatriate couple

10.1.2.1 Making connections

Finding community, forging friendships, and building support networks in Japan was seen as both challenging and rewarding for the expatriate couples. When isolated, the category "making connections" was found to be 39 per cent challenging and 61 per cent rewarding (aggregate by frequency). Nathan, like Amando, had expatriated twice before coming to Japan, and spoke about having to "start from ground zero" every time he moved to another country: "new food; new friends; new everyday things". Amando said he found creating a new network of people "very exhausting every single time". Expatriating as an individual, it is necessary to face outward for connection and support. Expatriating as a couple, there is an opportunity to turn toward each other, which on the one hand could strengthen the relationship, and on the other hand strain it. Missing the friendships they had independently of each other in Argentina, Lionel and Sebastian worried that they had become too dependent on one another, doing everything together. Meanwhile, Elsa attested to the importance of having friends for her own heath, and for the health of her relationship with Selena:

> …living in Japan, the people you meet, most of them don't plan to stay here forever. So, although you make a lot of new friends, your friendships don't last forever; people leave all the time. And so, this has been something, probably the reason why I'm so homesick, because in a short amount of time all my friends left suddenly. I'm really lonely, although I have [Selena], being dependent on just one person for all of your social interactions is not really healthy … whenever I'm feeling stressed I'm talking with her, I don't want to put all my stress and anxiety on her, it's also not good … I love being with her, and I love her as a person, but I don't like the feeling of my life circling [around her].

As an expatriate, the promise of friendship came with the inevitability of loss. Meeting new people, watching people leave, and in turn leaving people behind was seen as the constant pulse of the expatriate community. At work, Selena was out to only two of her coworkers. They were planning to leave the company. She didn't feel that she had anyone else to talk to. Becoming isolated in the workplace was a depressing thought for Selena.

The expatriate couples found points of connection in a variety of settings, utilising different media. It was clear that not all connections were equal, and finding the right connections took time and effort. Sarah and Grace spoke about going to events, mixers, and house parties and leaving feeling empty, unable to push past a level of superficiality. Eventually they began volunteering for a non-profit organisation, and connected with the nucleus of a sprawling, vibrant group of friends that was the right fit for them. Making connections was challenging for Grace, but in the face of difficulty the connections she made proved to be the most fulfilling and rewarding for her.

Along with more traditional modes of networking, the Internet proved an important space for making connections inside and outside the workplace. Guided by a uses and gratifications (U&Gs) framework, one study of Grindr, a location-based social networking and online dating application (app) for gay, bi, trans, and queer people, uncovered six U&Gs: social inclusion; sex; friendship; entertainment; romantic relationships; and location-based search (Van De Wiele & Tong, 2014). Wondering where "all the gays [were] hiding", Tobias and Wolfgang approached someone on Grindr for the first time, explicit that they were not looking for sex. This person conceded that "maybe it is difficult for gay people to meet, so maybe Grindr can be a very good medium to meet for friendship as well" and they became good friends. Tobias and Wolfgang also befriended a Japanese man who was looking for a language exchange buddy through a Facebook group. Additionally, a WhatsApp Messenger group chat had been designated for organising and disseminating information about events—including *nomikai* and karaoke—that the employees of Wolfgang's company could attend: Tobias had also been invited to events.[2] The dimension of SOGI diversity was also considered when making connections. While Wolfgang didn't "feel the need to look for only queer people", Tobias voiced that "it would be nice to have a bit more gay people in [their] circle". While they were living in London, Amando "felt so accepted by society and everyone" that he didn't have any gay friends. In contrast, while living in Brisbane, he had had many gay friends. He theorised that when the level of societal acceptance toward queer individuals is perceived as low, this would result in the formation of insular communities that would keep to themselves.

10.1.2.2 Cycle of rejection

Along with points of connection, the LGBT+ expatriate couples also experienced points of rejection. They faced rejection on two main fronts: rejection based on their foreigner identity and rejection based on their LGBT+ identity. Twelve (75%) of the participants in the short-answer survey indicated that they had experienced discrimination as a couple. Participants often attempted to rationalise experiences of rejection through a single dimension of difference: it was because they were a same-sex couple; it was because they were foreign. Rejection situated in a specific person or entity (e.g., the immigration bureau), and rejection located more generally, without a defined instigator, were the two types of rejection the participants described. As an example of the latter, to the question, “Overall, how do you feel you have been treated as an expatriate couple/family in Japan?” Sofia answered: “Well you are tolerated and treated politely, but not warmly and you will never be accepted to be a part of society”. Similarly, Brendan offered: “Japan is great for the short-to-medium term, but expats will find it draining to be here long term/forever (because you'll never be truly assimilated into Japanese society)”.

The host country has opportunities to reject (or to be perceived to be rejecting) the expatriate, just as the expatriate has opportunities to reject the host country. This will be referred to here as the “cycle of rejection”. Waiting to hear the verdict of his visa application was psychologically taxing for Lionel:

> But yeah, three weeks ago I was so mad with Japan, I was furious. I didn’t want to even go to the supermarket. I go to the supermarket and I look at people, and ‘I hate you’ … I was so mad, even with the weather … It was like, ‘I wanna go back to Argentina.’ I was waiting [for] the answer, ‘No, you don’t get the visa.’ Okay, I wanna buy a ticket; I was like that.

While Oberg’s (1960) conceptualisation of “culture shock” and the u-curve theory of adjustment (Lysgaard, 1955; see also Hofstede et al., 2010 for *the acculturation curve*) can explain some of Lionel’s experience, evidence from the interviews suggested that the uncertainty around the acceptance of the visa application exacerbated the situation. Nathan’s visa application was rejected, and he and Amando decided to leave Japan. Greg had no issue securing his visa, but the DA visa application for his husband Yusuf was rejected the first time. They made an appeal, and the whole process was finally resolved in their favour after having already been in Japan for six months. Many of the LGBT+ expatriate couples had to adjust to a new environment without knowing if their partner or if they themselves would be able to stay in Japan.

Along with the visa application process, applying for rental housing was the most common site of rejection for the LGBT+ expatriate couples, regardless of their relationship configuration. In the short-answer survey, ten (63%) of the participants indicated that they had experienced housing discrimination. Roy, who expatriated with his husband Jack and their two year old daughter, responded to the question, “Have you ever experienced discrimination as an expatriate couple/family in Japan?” as follows: “Out of 80+ available apartments that met our criteria, only two were friendly to foreigners. This meant we had to settle for the only options available, which were not our top choices”. Similarly, out of 40 apartments Joanna and her husband Mark chose, only three landlords green lit a walkthrough. They were explicitly told by the rental agency that they were working with that it was because they were “not Japanese”. The first of its kind, the *gaikokujin jūmin chōsa* (Foreign Residents Survey) was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice in 2016. Results of the survey showed that of the respondents who had looked for housing within the last five years (n = 2,044), 39.3 per cent had experienced rejection because they were foreign (Ministry of Justice, 2017).[3] Questions specific to housing discrimination were not included in Study 2 of the current research. Yet, 63 per cent of the respondents brought up the issue, either relating a personal experience of rejection or calling for better access to housing.

10.1.2.3 Support

Facing the turbulent waters of connection and rejection together, the couples found temporary reprieve in eddies of support. Three types of support salient to the LGBT+ expatriate experience were identified: organisational support; intermediary support; and partner support. Organisational support included recognition and acceptance of the couple's relationship from top management, assembling a legal team for the visa application process, monetary compensation for moving expenses, legal fees and flights, providing housing, extending health insurance to the partner, and offering Japanese language classes. Organisational support was highly variable, with some couples receiving little to no recognition or compensation. Joanna was categorised as a local hire (*jimoto saiyō*), despite applying for the position while still in her home country, and she and her husband received zero support. She said she would have appreciated a moving allowance and help finding an apartment. Yusuf and Greg struggled to secure Yusuf's DA visa. Responding to the question "Do you feel your employer is meeting your needs as an expatriate couple/family?" Greg wrote:

> For me, it's more "so, so" or neither yes/no. They provided [us] with some financial support but that's it. No help with everything else. I would have preferred them helping us with the visa, lawyers, language translations, et cetera, rather than given money [and] sort it out on our own.

Yusuf felt that the company were "washing their hands of [the] situation". It was clear that the expatriate couples did not deem monetary support, in and of itself, as sufficient organisational support.

Intermediary support was primarily provided by lawyers and real estate agents, who were able to interface with various legal and bureaucratic systems, answer questions, and advise the couples. This type of support was usually organised and paid for by the couple, much less commonly by the employer. Nine of the couples (70%) indicated that they worked directly with lawyers to facilitate the visa application process. Regardless of where they were, the couples were able to use the Internet to search for and communicate with the Japan-based lawyers. The couple usually had an initial consultation with the lawyer before their arrival in Japan, so that they could prepare all the necessary documents ahead of time. Lionel expressed that hiring a lawyer was expensive but worth it; navigating the visa process without the aid of a lawyer would have been unimaginable. For Roy and Jack, having a lawyer meant the difference between deciding to come to Japan and giving up on the idea entirely. Jack explained the situation:

> My employer told me it was impossible for my husband to secure a visa. I told them about the designated activities visa, but they didn't know anything about it and said they couldn't help me … We received a lot of bad advice from people online who also told us it was impossible. But then we found a website for an immigration lawyer in Japan who works with same-sex couples, and she said it would be a fairly simple and straightforward process. She helped us every step of the way, and we were able to secure a visa without too much trouble.

For the same-sex couples especially, lawyers were knowledgeable about the designated activities visa and provided essential, specialised support.

Finally, partner support was the support that the individuals received from their partners; having someone there constantly to rely on, to seek consul from, and to empathise with. On the subject of what the interviewees had found rewarding about expatriating as a couple, one of Grace’s responses was “bringing home with me everywhere I go”, which she elaborated on as follows:

> The days that I can remind myself that, well, if you’re there (looking at Sarah) then maybe it’ll actually be okay. Because it can feel terrifying, because there are so many other factors of fulfilment, that have to do with your career, or just any kind of ambition you have; whatever it is you want to achieve. And when you’re looking at all that, I think it takes away from some of the things that you already found, which is that sense of home that I will always have, and that feeling of, almost taking for granted, right: as long as you’re there I’ll be okay … because you are stability.

The expatriate experience tested the strength of the couples’ relationships, facilitated growth and new insights, and ultimately brought the couples closer together; analysis of the four core questions revealed that *relationship* was 31 per cent challenging and 69 per cent rewarding (aggregate by frequency). As Ruth noted, “we’ve gotten a lot closer as a couple because we're both expats, so it means that we have empathy for [each] other when we're struggling”. Expatriation is rife with uncertainty, so having one thing in your life that is certain—your partner—could give you the courage you need to take the plunge.

10.2 Discussion

Study 2 evolved naturally out of Study 1. After interviewing LGBT+ expatriates who had come to Japan as individuals, gaining a better understanding of the lived experiences of LGBT+ expatriates who had come with their partner or family became the focus. Discussion about marriage recognition and visa options in Study 1 served as the point of departure. Using a mixed methods qualitative approach, rich and detailed data were collected. Discovering just how precariously the LGBT+ expatriate couples were living lent itself to the first question to come out of the data analysis: *Why can't LGBT+ expatriate couples see a future in Japan and how does a mindset of temporariness influence the expatriate experience?* Coming to Japan was framed as a short-term sojourn, an opportunity for professional development, and an adventure. Of the twenty-one participants who had previously been to Japan, sixteen (76%) had come for a holiday, on a short business trip (i.e., one week or less), or on an orientation trip organised by their current employer. Many of the couples had visited as tourists, but had never planned or even thought about living in Japan. There was a lot of "uncertainty of how we could do it; if we could actually do it; if the experience was going to be good" (Sebastian), and finding helpful resources and advice on the Internet proved hit or miss. Taking a risk, the same-sex couples arrived in Japan, not recognised as a unit. Some couples, like Grace and Sarah, applied for work visas independently, their relationship legally invisible. In other cases, one person secured their residency card at the airport while the other waited for months on their temporary visa, hoping to transition to a designated activities visa. Couples and families that did not fit the narrow definition of what it means to be family in Japan—a married (cisgender) man and woman with the same family name and the husband as head of household—found themselves at odds with the bureaucratic process. Barriers to upward mobility in the workplace, the lack of competitive compensation, and the perceived inability to start a family were major deterrents to the longevity of the expatriation experience. In some ways, knowing that their time in Japan would be short made the expatriate couples appreciate the experience even more. They took the time to travel around the country, and to connect with people and place. In contrast to the LGBT+ expatriate individuals of Study 1, who were focused on making a life in Japan, the LGBT+ expatriate couples were living with a mindset of temporariness; their experience puncuated by precariousness. Understanding that the goals and outlooks for expatriate individuals and expatriate couples and families coming to Japan are different has implications for how companies support them and maximise their potential. The LGBT+ couples faced challenges when it came to securing a visa, and dealing with bureaucracy.

Answering the second question (*How can LGBT+ expatriate couples break the cycle of rejection and what kinds of support are important for expatriate couples in Japan?*) it became clear that all the LGBT+ expatriate couples faced some form of rejection. Whether emanating from a defined source or more nebulous, rejection rendered foreigner and LGBT+ subjectivities unviable and unintelligible in a Butlerian sense. As Butler (2004a) notes:

> The terms by which we are recognized as human are socially articulated and changeable. And sometimes the very terms that confer "humanness" on some individuals are those that deprive certain other individuals of the possibility of achieving that status, producing a differential between the human and the less-than-human. (p. 2)

The expatriate couples weren't rejected because of who they were, but rather because of *what* they appeared to be. Internalising this rejection could result in lashing out at the host country, as conveyed by Lionel's experience, or feeling like an outcast in society: "For someone who has no friends here, it is a deeply depressing country and I feel deeply unhappy" (Dirk). Breaking this cycle of rejection involved making the right connections and accessing different types of support. Whether identifying as introverted or extroverted, the expatriate couples recognised the importance of creating networks to combat feelings of loneliness and isolation, and understood that this would take work. Finding the right fit took time, but the payoff was a sense of belonging. For the LGBT+ participants, connecting with the queer community was of mixed priority. Three types of support—organisational support, intermediary support, and partner support—were available to the expatriate couples to varying degrees. All three could help facilitate introspection and expectation management. It was important that the LGBT+ expatriate couples set realistic expectations of themselves and of Japan, that were not based on preconceived notions or comparisons with their home country. Tobias and Wolfgang received highly tailored pre-departure intercultural training in a space where they could feel safe to talk about their personal situation. In this way, organisational support helped them to ground their expectations in reality and to identify potential challenges to come. Regarding intermediary support, Ruth and Luke experienced housing discrimination, but were able to "[shrug] it off" because they were informed ahead of time by their real estate agent that "some properties wouldn't be available to [them] because [they] were foreign and some landlords were still wary of foreigners". Rather than feeling rejected, they could just move on. Finally, for the LGBT+ expatriate couples, having partner support was associated with stability, which opened up the possibility to take risks, knowing they had someone to fall back on. "Having each other" (Nathan), the couples could empathise with each other through the shared expatriation experience, helping to put feelings of rejection into perspective.

In the short-answer survey, respondents were asked to write down three things they thought Japan was doing well in terms of facilitating expatriate couples/families, and three things they thought could be improved. The answers were coded in the same way as the set of four core questions, to see if any discrepancy between the same-sex couples group and the opposite-sex couples group could be detected. There were a total of 70 codes, which were sorted into nine categories representing two themes (see table 10.2):

- **Acknowledgement**—How the expat couple was acknowledged by and positioned within the system; and
- **Accessibility**—How the expat couple interfaced with and navigated the system.

Looking at relative placement of acknowledgement and accessibility on a continuum, the difference between the two groups was negligible. However, looking at the individual categories, the coding analysis revealed that, for same-sex couples, *recognition of unit* and *visa process* were the most frequent categories for "could improve", while for opposite-sex couples, *access to services* and *bureaucracy* were the most frequent. This research sheds light on the ways in which the visa application process can effect expatriate adjustment. It seems that in most expatriate research to date the visa has been assumed a non-issue. Of the nine same-sex couples, seven worked directly with lawyers. Securing the work-related visa was easy: "Mostly seamless/invisible. Everything was handled by the agency hired by my company" (Martin). Meanwhile, securing the designated activities visa was in some cases the polar opposite: "A long and winding road with lots of hurdles" (Yusuf). This was their experience even with intermediary support from a legal team. Here is an area where companies are clearly letting down their employees with dependent same-sex partners. When Nathan and Amando found out that Nathan's application had been rejected, they were told by immigration that they needed translated copies of marriage certificates from both their home countries. Since they were married in Australia, they had only supplied their Australian marriage certificate. Had they known, they could have made the necessary arrangements, and potentially avoided rejection. These couples are thrust into a very vulnerable position, the fate of their unit determined by a small handful of indifferent, supposedly impartial people at immigration. Obviously, individual companies cannot influence immigration law, but they can assist the couple to ensure that all necessary documents are prepared fully and accurately. Otherwise, the outcome that befell

Table 10.2 Themes and categories abstracted from analysis of short-answer survey questions (aggregate)

Theme	Category (number of codes)				Total
Acknowledgement	Recognition of unit (9)	**Visa process (10)**	Treatment (5)	Laws and Rights (4)	28
Accessibility	**Bureaucracy (12)** Housing access (6)	English language prevalence (8)	Welfare and finance (6)	**Access to services (10)**	42
				Total	70

Nathan and Amando will continue to happen. Beyond the stress and anxiety this has caused the couple, this was a wasted investment for the research institute.

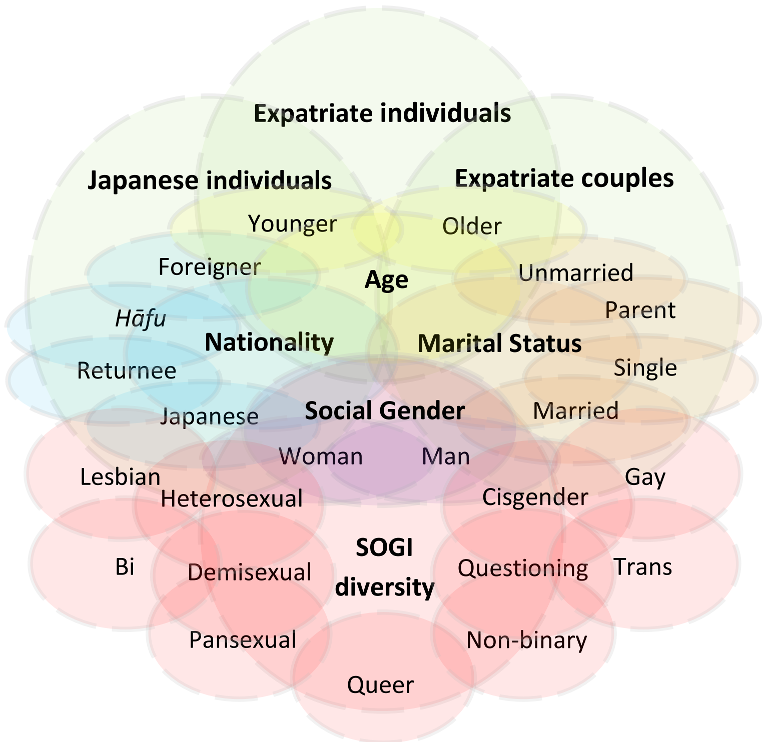
At this point, an important question to ask is: How much of their experience can be explained by their foreigner identity, and how much can be explained by their LGBT+ identity? Making delineations between the couples is illuminating. Looking at the different ways the couples were treated legally, it can be seen that those that were made up of a (legally designated) male/female unit were able to access the dependent visa for their spouse. Those that were made up of (legally designated) male/male or female/female units were not able to access the dependent visa and instead pursued a different route, the designated activities visa being the most prevalent amongst those sampled. Utilising this dichotomy, nine couples could be considered same-sex and four couples could be considered opposite sex. What this legal designation failed to capture were the diverse sexualities and genders the individuals identified as and embodied. For example, Ruth was non-binary and her (she also uses they/them pronouns) cis male husband Luke identified as queer. Ostensibly, they passed as a straight couple, and were afforded the privileges of a straight couple, something which Ruth spoke about in the Study 1 interview. This assumption of cisgender and heterosexuality erases and invalidates diverse SOGI configurations. Viewing the sampled couples through a SOGI diverse lens, it could be said that twelve couples were LGBT+ and one couple was a pair of cisgender and heterosexual (cis-het) individuals. The cis-het configuration is but one of a plethora of possible configurations individuals and couples can embody and perform. This is important because this research has made it clear that legal designation did not reflect lived experience. The same-sex/opposite sex (assumed heterosexual) couple dichotomy is problematic, as it did not reveal the true diversity of gender and sexuality. A “straight” couple (made up of a male passing person and a female passing person) carries with them the dual assumption that they are both heterosexual and are both cisgender. By the same token, a “same-sex” couple (made up of two people that pass as the same-sex/gender) are assumed to be gay or lesbian and, once again, cisgender. This completely erases bisexuality as an experience, and dismisses the diverse genders beyond cisgender. Grace and Sarah talked about the frustration of being labelled lesbian when they actually identify as bisexual and demisexual. Ultimately, individuals should not be categorised and defined by who they are in a relationship with.

Another area of vulnerability for LGBT+ couples is cross-cultural adjustment, or *acculturation*. The language barrier and difficulty making connections with Japanese coworkers were highlighted in the data. Research indicates that integrating into Japanese society is particularly challenging (e.g., Napier & Taylor, 1995; Froese, 2010; Yamashiro, 2011). In the Expat Explorer survey, out of 33 countries, Japan ranked 32nd in the metric “ease of settling in”, a downward trend from previous survey results (HSBC, 2019). The perception that Japanese society rejected the expatriate couples was prevalent across the sample population. Despite that, six of the eight couples in the short-answer survey indicated that they would recommend Japan to other LGBT+ expatriates. Some of the couples did have access to Japanese language classes provided by the employer. In practice, these classes could help individuals develop language skills and cultural know-how that could be used to better acclimate to their work environment. In reality, many of the participants felt they did not have the time to spend on language learning. Amando could not fit the classes into his already busy work schedule, and similarly Wolfgang wanted to prioritise work. Everyone who participated in the interviews and the short-answer surveys was instructed to rate their Japanese language ability on a 5-point scale from “basic” (1) to “fluent/native” (5). With an average score of 1.6, the LGBT+ expatriate couples were significantly less proficient in Japanese than the LGBT+ expatriate individuals (M = 3.9). While measuring language proficiency using self-ratings is problematic (Tomoschuk et al., 2019), considering the rapid turnover of expatriate couples, and the fact that even those that rated themselves as having “conversational” (3) or “business professional” (4) level Japanese still found it difficult fostering friendships with Japanese people, investing in language classes for expatriate couples may prove fruitless for companies. Time and resources could be better spent in helping couples deal with specific language-related challenges, such as interfacing with bureaucratic processes at their city office or the local immigration office.

10.3 Intersections

Thus far the research population has been examined as three separate cohorts: the Japanese individuals cohort (J cohort); the expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort); and the expatriate couples cohort (C cohort). The purpose of this section is to illuminate how SOGI diversity intersects with other dimensions of diversity. Here, the three cohorts will be considered together, and an intersectional analysis will be applied across the four social categories, namely age, social gender, nationality, and marital status, that were introduced in chapter 2 (section 2.2). Rather than viewing intersectionality through an additive approach lens—that is, saying that women who are foreign and LGBT+ in Japan experience triple disadvantage, for instance—explicated below are differentiated and contextually embedded experiences of privilege and oppression. A part of the multilevel relational framework introduced in chapter 2 (section 2.3.2), Figure 10.1 depicts the salient identity categories that came out of Study 1 and Study 2. Depending on the situation, certain identities came to the fore while others were minimised or rendered invisible. Positionality along identity axes shaped the power dynamic, with participants moving between "dominant" groups and "nondominant" groups.

Figure 10.1 Intersectional diversity of three LGBT+ cohorts in the context of Japan



10.3.1 Age – Living in different times

A stark generational divide between younger LGBT+ individuals and older LGBT+ individuals living in Japan was apparent. The first interviewee of Study 1, Takeshi, identified as gay, was married to a woman, and had a male partner. Takeshi, who was 51 at the time of the interview, was keenly aware of a generation gap, and felt envious of the people living in “this era”. When it was pointed out that he was also living in “this era”, he asserted that “we are living in the same time-frame, but we are living in a different cultural background and a different time-flow”. Despite living at the same time, there was a perception that older people and younger people were *living in different times*. Reviewing the central themes of the life course research paradigm, Elder (1994) writes: “Especially in rapidly changing societies differences in birth year expose individuals to different historical worlds, with their constraints and options” (p. 5). In the current inquiry, these constraints and options could be seen in relation to how LGBT+ people constructed and communicated their identities, how they formed families, and how they accessed information and services. Research conducted by Sambe (2020) examined the lives of LGBT+ individuals who had produced and raised children through heterosexual marriage. She noted the existence of a “significant social divide” (p. 193) between those born before the LGBT boom, and those currently experiencing the boom. Interviews with four individuals born between the late 1960s and the early 1970s who were assigned female at birth (AFAB), revealed the limited scope of language available to express SOGI diversity, and the pervasive message of hetero-marriage and childbirth as the “natural course of life” (p. 189). The survey by Kamano and colleagues (2020) found that, while 54.2 per cent and 30.1 per cent of respondents in the 20s and 30s, respectively, reported that they had experienced education related to “sexual minorities” during high school, on average, less than 10 per cent of respondents aged 40 and above had received such education. Having no other script to follow, no queer role models to emulate, it is understandable that older LGBT+ people in Japan may have made decisions that lead them to reproduce naturalised heteronormative modes of living.

In Study 1, the divide between older and younger was exemplified in lived experiences of the participants who were trans. For example, Rin, who was married to a woman and had a son, was contemplating gender confirmation surgeries (GCS) at 54 years of age. At the time of the interview she did not meet the requirements to change the gender designation on her *koseki*. In contrast, Ken, who was 31 years old and had completed GCS in his early 20s, had already updated his *koseki* to match his gender. Ken grew up with the Internet and greater availability of information about SOGI diversity, as well as greater access to support groups and health specialists. This had important implications for workplace experiences. Ken was able to present a stable gender identity at the commencement of employment at his current place of work, and most people didn't know that he was AFAB. In contrast, Rin went through a visible transition process in her place of work, and experienced support from top management and some coworkers, while also experiencing discrimination from other coworkers. Yoshi, who was 51 years old at the time of the interview, wanted to change the gender marker on his *koseki* but was worried about the health-related risks pursuing surgery at his age. He recognised that in some countries people are able to change their legal gender designation without surgery. Yoshi was waiting for the law in Japan to move in this direction. Rin referred to transitioning at a younger or an older age as the *futatsu pīku* (two peaks) for trans people. It can be surmised that younger trans people usually have an easier time of transitioning, while older trans people, many of whom already have an established family—as Sambe's (2020) research investigated—face additional social and health-related hurdles.

As discussed in chapter 8 (section 8.1.2), age was found to be an indicator of level of disclosure in the Study 1 sample group, with those under the age of 35 more likely to be out than those over the age of 35. Participants from the J cohort and the E cohort talked about how information helped them to become who they are. Petra, who identified as pansexual, said that she discovered the word on Tumblr.[4] After learning more through a Google search, she decided that the term "pansexual" most accurately described her sexual orientation. During high school, Ken found information about gender and sexuality using the Internet at the library. Armed with this knowledge, he was able to talk about gender with his *kōhai* who also identified as a trans man. Yuki denied her sexuality for many years. For her, being lesbian meant taking the hard road: "I didn't want to be a gay. It's less complicated to be straight". While she was living in the U.S. in her early 20s, she watched a television drama called *The L Word* (2004-2009). This was her first contact with mainstream representations of lesbian identities. Yuki was able to see a reflection of herself in the characters, and gain at least some understanding of what it might be like to be a lesbian: how to navigate same-sex relationships, how to navigate societal expectations, and so forth. Meanwhile, Hide explained that when he was younger, in order to meet other gay men, he would have to first compose a personal advertisement for publication in a magazine, and then wait two weeks for potential responses. Sending letters or physical photos to each other through the mail could be fraught with risk, especially if living with family. Yoshi and Shin talked about the shifting role of the gay bar as a source of information. They noted that printed publications, less relevant to younger patrons, were being reformatted (e.g., larger font size) to be more accessible to a readership that was becoming older. Takeshi lamented the fact that while it was easier than ever to connect to people using the Internet, he felt that, although convenient, the connection is “thin, superficial”.

Research has considered the role that social networking technologies have in (re)shaping queer communities and spaces (e.g., White Hughto et al., 2017; Zervoulis et al., 2020). Baudinette (2019) acknowledges the fears that queer community spaces in Tokyo such as Ni chōme[5] will become obsolete due to the rise of online dating and use of location-based dating apps on smartphones. However, in his ethnographic study he argues that, in fact, these apps, as well as social networking services such as Twitter, both produce and reinforce Ni chōme’s status as a queer space. Ni chōme continues to act as an important meeting place for LGBT+ people to physically interact, while online spaces facilitate virtual interactions as well as potential in-person connections. For example, the gay dating app 9Monsters[6] regularly advertises community events such as parties that are themed around certain age groups, many of which are held in Ni chōme. Users throughout Japan can see these advertisements and decide to travel to Tokyo in order to attend these events and meet new people. Before the mainstreaming of LGBT+ information, and especially before the ease of anonymous access to information through the Internet, as well as the formation of online communities, LGBT+ individuals may have felt completely isolated in their experience. Feeling incongruent with societal norms and expectations, and lacking sophisticated language to express their LGBT+ identity, they may have decided to supress feelings of difference and strive toward a “normal” life as dictated by society. In the interview, Rin expressed that she used to imagine herself dying a man (*dansei to shite shinō to omottemashita*). Meeting other trans people in Ni chōme and seeing the possibility of different ways of living (*ikikata*) enabled her to embrace her own trans journey. She was also able to read about stories and experiences of other trans women on the Internet. Younger LGBT+ people may not immediately recognise that growing up in the age of the Internet has granted them significant privilege in terms of access to information and to queer spaces, both virtual and physical.

Looking specifically at the E and C cohorts, expatriating while younger and/or before having children, seemed to be more tenable for LGBT+ individuals and couples. Age could constrain or afford options related to expatriation. For example, age was a limiting factor in taking advantage of the so-called “working holiday visa”,[7] with eligibility varying by county. In the case of Germany, to be eligible, applicants must be between 18 and 30 years old (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2020). Because she was under the age of 30 at the time, Elsa was able to apply. She first came to Japan on a working holiday, and subsequently returned on a work visa. For the LGBT+

expatriate couples especially, Japan was not seen as a country where they could settle down and raise children, as articulated in section 10.1.1.3. Only one of the 13 couples that participated in Study 2 had children. Jack and Roy wanted to give their two year old daughter the opportunity to experience a new language and culture. Jack talked about the additional stress and anxiety around not knowing if they would be able to stay in Japan due to difficulties securing a visa for Roy, saying that, "it wouldn't have been possible for one of us to just temporarily leave without causing a lot of strain on us as a family". Ultimately, companies recruiting diverse talent from overseas or from within Japan need to be aware of the challenges LGBT+ individuals face in relation to age, and develop policies that meet the unique needs of people at different life stages.

10.3.2 Social gender – Slipping under the radar

Distinguished from gender identity (*seijinin*), in this research, the intersection of "social gender" (*shakaiteki danjobetsu*) and SOGI diversity bore significant implications for all three cohorts. In particular, the experiences of participants who were women highlighted systems of privilege and oppression in relation to social gender. Airi and Mizuki spoke about what it means to be a woman in Japanese society: be "appealing to boys" and "wear makeup". Meanwhile, Rin exclaimed, "*mitame* (looks [matter])". On the surface, talking about makeup in the context of workplace inclusion might seem trivial, but in fact makeup is at once a tool that empowers people to express themselves, and a locus of bodily regulation. Standards around makeup use can be implemented and enforced in the workplace along with wider dress code policy: colour, style, and length of head hair, length of facial hair, type and colour of shoe, acceptability of piercings and tattoos, and so forth. Those who do not conform may be reprimanded or lose their job completely. This may render people who cannot pass perfectly as a "man" or as a "woman" particularly vulnerable. A poignant point raised by Mackie (2010) is that "the *act of narrating* multiple forms of passing between masculine and feminine identities challenges mainstream understanding of sex, gender and sexuality; but the successful *act of passing* provides no challenge to these mainstream understandings" (p.127; emphasis in original). In their book, *Gender ambiguity in the workplace*, Fogarty and Zheng (2018) illustrated through analysis of participant interviews how, in the context of the "progressive" San Francisco Bay Area, "intentionally doing gender ambiguity" was heavily policed and almost universally condemned in the workplace. A vicious cycle is (re)produced: because of ongoing discrimination in response to gender ambiguity, in order to gain legitimacy trans people feel that they have to conceal their gender identity or modify their gender expression in order to pass as more gender-normative; thus, the process of binary transition is privileged and expressions of gender ambiguity fail to be normalised.

In the current inquiry participants wrestled with the oftentimes conflicting desires of wanting to express themselves and wanting to fit in. In Mizuki's case, her employer welcomed an open discussion about dress code, and encouraged employees to take responsibility for their own choices around how they expressed themselves. She felt she had a lot of bodily autonomy in her workplace, able to dress in a way that she felt was appropriate, and feeling no pressure to wear makeup. Performing normative gender through dress and demeanour, many of the LGBT+ participants were able, intentionally or otherwise, to pass as straight and/or cisgender. Yuki explained that because she and Renata "dress like other women" it was easier for them to "conceal [their] sexuality". At the same time, for the LGBT+ expatriates who did want to express their sexuality or gender through clothing in non-normative ways, such as Skye, Ruth, or Leonardo, their differentness was reduced to their foreigner identity. They recognised that they were physically safer than they would be in their home countries, but not necessarily psychologically safer. Relatedly, Grace and Sarah felt that, in public contexts, compared with two men, two women showing affection toward one another were more likely to be read as "friends". Selena referred to this as the "privilege of being two women". She felt that, in Japan, two women holding hands in public was seen as a normal, homosocial behaviour. Elsa added that she felt safer holding Selena's hand in public in Japan than she would in Germany: she averred that they would be read as gay in Germany. This is a telling example of how context shapes LGBT+ individuals' choices and behaviours. Grace felt that this "privilege" meant that they could, "as gay women, easily slip under the radar", and Sarah proffered that two women being close "doesn't threaten anyone". They went on to share a story about the aftermath of a *bōnenkai* ("year-end party") with their work team. Two men from the team decided to leave together on a train, and their boss "jokingly" remarked: "What, are they gay?" Meanwhile, Grace and Sarah were called "cute" and "best friends" in the workplace. On the one hand, they were insulated from sexuality-based discrimination. On the other hand, their relationship was trivialised.

Overall, study findings indicated that the women sampled were simultaneously exposed to less discrimination and harassment as LGBT+ individuals and more discrimination and harassment because of their social gender. This is in line with previous research, which has found that there are gender differences in perceived workplace discrimination: Women employees were more likely than men to report discriminatory practices at work (Parnell et al. 2012; Lloren, A., & Parini, 2017). Gender and sexual discrimination often reinforce each other. Both Elsa and Selena and Grace and Sarah shared their stories about being the object of fetishisation by men. As "friends" on a night out, they were seen as sexually available, and had to endure solicitation and subsequent verbal abuse once it was clear to their harassers they were not available for sex; the fear of physical violence was ever-present. While this research revealed that Japan was considered a safer country for LGBT+ expatriates, experiences of sexual harassment, violence, and rape should not be dismissed. Sexual assault in Japan has been characterised by a lack of reporting and a prevalence of date or acquaintance rape (Xie et al., 1995; Dussich, 2001; Minowa, 2019), and Japanese and foreigners alike are affected (Kumar, 2019). A white paper on gender equality reported that 30 per cent of women and 20 per cent of men have experienced domestic violence, and that 40 per cent of women and 70 per cent of men consulted no one (Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, 2020a). Further, a 2019 survey found that 37.7% of women had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, compared with 14.2% of men (Japanese Trade Union Confederation, 2019), and there have been numerous high-profile cases of sexual harassment and sexism in the media (see Dalton, 2019, for review). More recently, former prime minister and (now replaced) head of Tokyo Olympics organising committee Mori Yoshiro, referring to plans to increase the number of women on the Olympic community board, remarked that women talk too much (Reynolds, 2021). A deeper discussion of abuse and discrimination against women in Japan is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say, in a society where speaking out is discouraged and group harmony is paramount, women, cisgender and trans, queer and straight, are distinctly disadvantaged as long as positions of power and authority remain dominated by men.

Case in point, gay men who were married to women could find success in both career and family, and unmarried gay men who could pass as straight could obtain and maintain managerial roles, as evidenced in the current inquiry. Arguably, many gay men in Japan can, despite their sexuality, still effectively access heterosexual privilege and male privilege. Meanwhile, women in Japan, regardless of sexuality, are less likely to experience career success. Further, being a single woman, or being a woman in a relationship with another woman, could be economically unviable (Kamano, 2009; Hiramori, 2020; Ueno, 2021). Joanna was not openly bi in her workplace. Yet she still faced discrimination and sexism, and was not able to attain the promotion she was anticipating. She was acutely aware of the "boys' club" culture she had encountered time and again; her workplace in Japan was no exception. Similarly, Sarah and Grace were not open about their relationship in their workplace. Despite being positioned as just friends, they were given a "couple name" and treated as a single unit; devalued and unacknowledged as two separate human beings. They contended that they had not experienced LGBT-related discrimination, but had experienced sexual harassment and power harassment. Sarah and Grace reflected on how things could have been different if one of them had been a man. Inside and outside the workplace women are told, through explicit and implicit messages, repeatedly, that men are more valuable. Gender roles and heteronormativity (re)enforce power dynamics that privilege “men” and oppress “women” and ultimately limit and constrain everyone in a cycle of normative violence. By recognising SOGI diversity, embracing ambiguous representations of gender, and installing meritocratic systems of evaluation across all levels of operation, organisations can begin to break the social gender binary and put people first.

10.3.3 Nationality – An animal in a zoo

Márcia was born and raised in Brazil, her father Japanese, and her mother second generation Japanese Brazilian. Following her mother, she had originally planned to stay in Japan only for a few years. More than 20 years later, she had permanent residence status and a stable public sector job. Yet, throughout the interview she talked about struggling to connect with people inside and outside the workplace and expressed a desire to return to her home country, distancing herself from her ethnic Japanese background and firmly aligning herself with her national Brazilian roots: “So don't really see myself living here forever, because I really want to go back, one day. If someone offered me a job, I think if the salary was okay, maybe I would go. No doubt, I would go now!” Márcia’s experience finds resonance in existing literature. In what Bauböck and Faist (2010) refer to as “reactive ethnicity”, scholars such as Roth (2002) and Tsuda (2003) have shown the way some *nikkei burajirujin* (“Brazilians of Japanese ancestry”) who migrate to Japan have responded to social marginalisation by reasserting their Brazilianness. Similarly, Grace, who was Japanese American, explained that her family had a stronger affiliation with Hawaiʻi than with Japan. *Kikokushijo* like Mizuki and Airi shared their experiences of being Japanese nationals that were not always seen as “Japanese” enough. They faced microaggressions in which their identities were reduced to their “returnee” status: e.g., “You are vocal (about an issue) because you are a returnee”. As Mizuki put it, “it does hurt me when you see me as an animal in a zoo rather than [as] a person”. Meanwhile, Georgie felt that he had always been “cast as [the] half kid”, not feeling particularly connected to either England or Japan.

As an island nation, Japan is separated from the rest of the world and, in recent history at least, has seen comparatively little migration flow. Geographic isolation and limited immigration, coupled with the dominant ideology of *tan’itsu minzoku shakai*, has produced entrenched societal understandings of what constitutes “inside” Japan and what is relegated to “outside” Japan. The demographic reality in Japan is such that those who appear to be ethnically “Japanese” tend to outnumber all other ethnic groups in most contexts. The image of Japan as mostly Japanese—

including the Ryūkyū Island and Ainu people when politically or commercially advantageous[8]—is perpetuated by the media and front facing representation across all sectors. There is also a history of passing and repression of cultural roots,[9] with many of the Korean and Taiwanese diaspora forced to change their names through *kōminka* (imperialisation) policies of Japan's colonial period, or otherwise choosing to take on "Japanese names" (*tsūmei*)[10] in order to avoid discrimination (Tamura, 2003; Han, 2008; Park-Kim, 2020). The "Japanese" and "foreigner" delineation was explored in the current inquiry and, as discussed in chapter 8 (section 8.3.1) as well as in the above examples, nationality served as a basis for identity (de)construction. For many of the participants, being othered as *gaijin* or *hāfu* or *kikokushijo* actually displaced being othered as LGBT+ individuals. To an extent, these participants engaged in (re)producing their own Otherness, through the strategic deployment of the *gaijin* card, for instance. There was a certain comfort and alleviation of pressure that came with not having to "live up" to the standards of Japanese society. At the same time, the participants faced exclusion at the intersections of nationality and LGBT+ identity.

As discussed in section 10.1.2.2, the visa application process and applying for housing were found to be the main sites of formal rejection for the LGBT+ expatriate participants. In terms of housing, Selena related an experience about looking for an apartment with Elsa. They found an apartment that allowed for *rūmu shea* ("room share"; i.e., living with someone who is not related). However, as the real estate agent was relaying information to the landlord over the phone, what Selena heard went along the lines of: "It's two women; oh yeah, it's strange (*hen deshō*); I understand". Needless to say, their application was rejected. Meanwhile, Brendan expressed that he and his husband Seth weren't able to rent a one bedroom apartment together because they were "two dudes". At least one recent survey has shown that landlords are somewhat willing to accommodate LGBT individuals and couples (Recruit Sumai Company, 2018b). Table 10.3 shows the results of the question in which landlords were asked how they would feel about different individuals or groups of people applying for tenancy. Overall, results are quite consistent across applicant descriptions, with landlords being most permissive of single LG and trans applicants, and least approving of room share between men and between men and women, and of same-sex couples who are men. Here, bisexuality is not represented, and it is not clear if the descriptor "transgender" refers to a single applicant or multiple applicants. Based on this data, it can be said that people who are in same-sex relationships, regardless of whether or not they are open about their relationship, will have more difficulty finding an apartment than single LGBT+ applicants. However, LGBT+ expatriates also contend with an intersecting foreigner identity, which, as

Table 10.3 Landlords responding to question regarding prospective tenants (*n* = 1024)

	Would permit without issue	Would hesitate/ prioritise other applicants	Would not want	Don't know
Single "homosexual" (man)[11]	44.2	16.2	22.8	16.8
Single "homosexual" (woman)	45.3	17.2	20.4	17.1
Same-sex couple (men)	36.7	18.8	27.4	17.1
Same-sex couple (women)	39.3	18.6	25.9	16.3
Transgender	44.1	18.5	20.3	17.1
Room share (man/woman)	38.3	17.5	28.1	16.1
Room share (men)	34.9	19.6	29.2	16.3
Room share (women)	39.8	17.5	26.5	16.2

Adapted from Recruit Sumai Company, 2018b

indicated by the current research and elsewhere (e.g., Ministry of Justice, 2017), was the explicit reason for rejection by landlords. Relatedly, 19.9 per cent of Japanese respondents in the World Values Survey Wave 7 (Haerpfer et al., 2022) indicated that they would not want "unmarried couples living together" as neighbours, compared with 26.4 per cent who would not want "homosexuals", and 29.1 per cent who would not want "immigrants/foreign workers".[12] The participants experienced informal rejection as a more abstract, general feeling of exclusion from society, as well as more concrete rejection in interpersonal relationships. They described racism in Japan as "subtle" and "insurmountable".

Key components in the construction of modern Japan's national identity, the Japanese words for race, *jinshu* and *minzoku*, have permitted Japan to "differentiate itself from its significant Others: Asia and the West" (Kawai, 2015, p. 24). Racism is generally viewed as a "foreign issue" in contemporary Japan, and the obfuscation of racism is "linked with the conceptual presence and nominal absence of *jinshu* and *minzoku* in defining Japaneseness" (p. 24). In other words, as Matthews (2020) observes, "racism and discrimination are more easily disguised as nationalism" (p. 55). Selena noted how coming to Japan made her think about her identity more. In the U.S., she identified as "Asian-American" and felt that she played up her Asianness when relating to other Asian people. In Japan, by contrast, Selena realised how "westernised" she was, and felt she couldn't relate to Japanese people sometimes despite having a similar appearance. Similarly, Grace noted how in America she was considered white or just "American". Meanwhile, she was able to pass as Indian, Thai, or Japanese while living in those countries, "as long as I don't open my mouth [to speak]", she said. This was more challenging than rewarding because when people did realise that Grace was not in fact a Japanese national, for instance, they would have to adjust their expectations. As she put it: "Of course, my race in America mattered, but it mattered more when I moved to Asia". In their workplace Sarah and Grace recalled a presentation they attended. The messages of "we should include" English speakers and "be nice" to foreigners came across as patronising. Here, Japanese national identity and conceptions of Japan-as-homogeneous-society are reasserted through separating out "non-Japaneseness" and packaging it for a presentation about diversity. For the LGBT+ expatriates, bridging these essentialised national boundaries seemed at times futile. Similarly, many of the LGBT+ Japanese participants felt that they didn't fit within conceptualisations of "Japaneseness". Along with questioning dominant discourses of Japaneseness, companies can create space by de-essentialising and de-othering categories of diversity. However, it is also important to remember the past, and not fall into the trap of propagating discourses of "post-race" and "colour-blindness". In short, companies should recognise how racism is (re)produced in daily life and embedded in institutions and systems, and acknowledge Japan's history when developing policies to support employees at the intersections.

10.3.4 Marital status – It's not personal

Like nationality, marital status is a legal and social regulatory mechanism, important in the construction of citizenship in Japan. Marriage is seen a precursor to full participation in society; the key to achieving *shakaijin* status (Edwards, 1989). Meanwhile, non-marriage may communicate a level of immaturity or irresponsibility (Lunsing, 2001/2016), limiting career advancement and access to social capital. Despite the phenomena of *mikonka* and *bankonka* (see chapter 2, section 2.2.4), which may at first glance suggest an easing of the marriage-as-a-societal-obligation sentiment, the discourse of (heterosexual) marriage remained prevalent. For the LGBT+ individuals cohort, marriage was found to be a fixture of conversation within and outside the workplace, with many participants commenting on the frequency with which they encountered marriage-related questions. For instance, Yoshi was asked about his personal life often at work:

> *I am extremely grateful for the people that don't use girlfriend (*kanojo*); they say things like, "How is your partner today"; they don't say, "How is your girlfriend; how is your wife (*okusan*)". However, most people, no matter the age, say things like, "Are you married; how is your wife; did she come to Tokyo with you; what does she do for work, etc."*

As a result of heteronormativity, using the gendered terms *kanojo* and *okusan*, rendered Yoshi's relationship invalid. In response to these questions, he deployed the word *pātonā* (from English, "partner").

Recently, in English-language speaking countries, the word partner has been deployed by people in queer relationships—and also non-queer relationships—as a gender neutral term to refer to their spouse or significant other. For example, while living in Australia, Shogo used the word partner to refer to his (then) boyfriend. In this way, relationships beyond the binary and beyond heterosexuality can be acknowledged and included in the conversation. Using the word partner could be also considered a form of signalling, as things are left ambiguous until further inquiry is made. Hide also made use of ambiguous language, deploying the word *aite* ("partner") when referring to his boyfriend. Some people could still read this as an opposite-sex partner, and continue the line of questioning—in the case of Hide—with a female partner envisaged. This kind of constant questioning could be considered a workplace microaggression. Climates of compulsory heterosexuality and compulsory marriage led those such as Haru to withdraw from coworkers and not feel safe in their workplace. In the current research, marriage was positioned as a privilege that not everyone was able to, or wanted to, access. To date, marriage in Japan is limited to between a "man" and a "woman". However, as discussed in section 10.2, assumptions of apparently "opposite-sex" partners as being heterosexual and cisgender can render SOGI diversity, particularly bisexuality and tranness, invisible. Further, because Japan does not recognise same-sex marriage, bureaucratic processes can obfuscate the true nature of a relationship. For example, despite being married, Ian and Martin were expected to register their address as "roommates". At the same time, they did continue to receive the same employee benefits from Ian's company that they had received in their home country.

Marriage facilitated the dependant visa for opposite-sex partners, and the designated activities visa for same-sex partners. Olena and Dirk did not want to get married. However, for Olena's employer to provide housing, it was a requirement. Airi, who was critical of marriage, including same-sex marriage, faced discrimination when apartment hunting with her girlfriend; their relationship was seen as "unstable". As shown in table 10.3 above, landlords were about as reticent to allow unmarried heterosexual partners to rent an apartment as they were to allow unmarried same-sex partners. Hide touched upon the economic strain and exclusionism that resulted from discrimination against unmarried couples, regardless of sexuality or gender. Company-provided insurance and pension, applying for credit cards or home loans: these benefits and processes are easier to access for married partners and there are more options available. It is within a company's purview whether or not to recognise relationships outside marriage. For instance, in 2016, Rakuten extended benefits to same-sex partners and implemented a host of same-sex inclusive services for Rakuten customers including credit cards and life insurance (Rakuten, 2016).[13] Fukuda (2020) notes that, while common law marriage is a legally defined consensual union—at least, between men and women—in Japan it is difficult to prove as there is no official record of the relationship. Further, although couples in these unions can claim the same employee benefits as married couples, because of the low prevalence of common law marriage, they may be reluctant to declare their relationship to their workplaces, as it may be seen as socially deviant, and represent a risk to their reputations.[14] The white paper on gender equality (Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, 2022), approximately 2 to 3 per cent of the adult population were practicing common law marriage.

On the other hand, marriage was actually a complicating factor in the transition process for the trans participants. In order for Yoshi and Rin to change their gender designation on their *koseki*, they would have to first divorce their partners. For some, marriage, with the constraints it brings, such as forcing both partners to take the same name, is viewed as antiquated (Kobayashi, 2021). For others, like those in same-sex partnerships in Japan who cannot currently access it, marriage is worth fighting for (The American Chamber of Commerce Japan, 2018). Reformulating the concept of *homonationalism* (Puar, 2007) for the Japanese context, Khor and Kamano (2021) are critical of the Japanese state, which presents a narrative of tolerance toward SOGI diversity—as discussed in chapter 5 (section 5.2.3)—while simultaneously denying full citizenship to non-heterosexual and non-cisgender Others. Arguments in favour of same-sex marriage inadvertently reinforce this narrative, "naturalizing marriage and removing it from its sociolegal context and biologizing sexual orientation" (p. 10). The "born this way" narrative has been invoked by pro-marriage equality groups in Japan, including the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (2019), Equal Marriage Alliance (EMA) Japan (n.d.), and Marriage for All Japan (n.d.). For example, citing a research paper titled *Homosexuality as a Consequence of Epigenetically Canalized Sexual Development* (Rice et al., 2012) in answering the question "Why are there people attracted to the same sex?" on EMA Japan (n.d.) website's Q&A section, the following is stated: "It is *widely accepted* that homosexuality and gender identity disorders, similar to heterosexuality, are not chosen by one's free will. Rather, sexual preferences and gender identity disorders are *widely accepted* to be biologically determined before birth" (n.p., emphasis added). As with the research paper, the tone here is essentialising and pathologising.

It is unfortunate that in the pursuit of equal rights that all these arguments have to be made in the first place: that the existence of LGBT+ people has to be justified as a biological aberration that "can't be helped". In the context of the United States, Diamond and Rosky (2016) make the case that the immutability of sexual orientation should no longer be invoked as a foundation for the rights of individuals with same-sex attractions and relationships because these arguments are: 1. unscientific (sexual attraction is known to change over time); 2. unnecessary (courts have used grounds other than immutability to protect the rights of sexual minorities); and 3. unjust (they privilege sexual minorities who experience their sexuality as fixed over those who experience their sexuality as fluid). In Japan, the reality is that many fundamental legal, medical, and financial rights that are afforded to married couples, such as visitation if one partner is hospitalised, applying for spousal tax deductions, and attaining joint custody of children, are inaccessible to same-sex couples.[15] Rather than framing marriage equality as a panacea for LGBT+ inequality, social justice projects should also tend to other areas of the Japanese constitution that could be amended (e.g., expanding the antidiscrimination clause to explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity). Of course, as already discussed, laws do not simply override social norms (see Kahan, 2000): "Prejudice remains present at some level in all societies long after necessary legal reforms have been made" (United Nations, 2017, p. 28). As it stands, instead of being seen as a choice, one of many possibilities to form a unit, marriage in Japan is seen as an ultimatum. As Kazuki explained, "so when you get married, it's not personal, it's about two families getting together and making [a] new family". The *koseki* system and laws governing inheritance and child custody, as well as messages from workplace, government, and society at large, compel individuals to see marriage as the only viable option in creating a family and securing success as a productive member of society. People in same-sex relationships are effectively locked out, and economic penalties and societal failure await those who cannot conform. Even for LGBT+ expatriate couples, marriage was a coercive force, firmly knotted to visa and employee benefits. The 2019 survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020) found that only 11.3 per cent (n = 1750) and 13.8 per cent of companies (n = 2326) had family benefits or a "*keichō kyūka seido* (congragulatory or condolence leave system)", respectively, for common law marriage couples. Rather than waiting for same-sex marriage to be legalised, or more directly lobbying for its legislation, companies in Japan should recognise that family formations outside marriage do exist and are valid.

Notes

1. Reproduced with permission from Expat Explorer Broadening perspectives, published in 2017 by HSBC Holdings plc.
2. WhatsApp Messenger is freeware, a cross-platform messaging and voice over IP service owned by Meta Platforms, Inc.
3. Note that the majority of participants selected China (1382; 32.5%) and South Korea (941; 22.1%) in answering the question about nationality/region (*kokuseki/chīki*). In regards to status of residence, participants selected the following: 30.4% selected *ippan eijūsha* (regular permanent residents); 17.6% selected *tokubetusu eijūsha* (special permanent residents); 9% selected *teijūsha* (long-term residents); and 39.7% selected *sono ta* ("other"; see http://www.moj.go.jp/content/001226182.pdf).The question for *seibetsu* ("sex"), along with *otoko* (male), *onna* (female), included the option *sono ta* ("other"); only 3 respondents (0.1%) selected "other". If the respondent wanted to indicate that they were living with a same-sex partner, they could have potentially selected "other", but what exactly "other" meant was not elaborated upon in the report; 175 respondents (4.1%) selected "other".
4. Tumblr is a micro-blogging and social networking website owned by Automattic.
5. Described as the "largest gay town in the world" (e.g., Yotsumote & Senba, 2017), in a space of about 300 metres squared, Shinjuku Ni Chōme contains over 300 gay, lesbian, and cross-dressing bars and clubs (Fushimi, 2019).
6. Launched in 2011, 9Monsters was developed in Japan, and had 600,000 users as of January 2021 (see https://ninemonsters.com/advertise).
7. Working holiday programmes allow young people to engage in employment in another country as an incidental activity of their holidays (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2020b). Commencing with Australia in 1980, as of the April 2020, Japan has bilateral agreements with 26 countries/regions.
8. The Ainu people were forcibly assimilated as Japanese under the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act (1899), which was repealed in 1997 and replaced by the Ainu Cultural Promotion Act (Morris-Suzuki, 1998, 2018). It was not until 2008, after pressure from activist groups and the UN that the Ainu were recognised as a distinct indigenous ethnicity by the Japanese state (Winchester, 2020). Meanwhile, the food, music, and symbols of "Okinawa" have been commodified and celebrated as part of Japan. For example, the author witnessed an "Okinawa fair" at their local Summit, a supermarket chain. In the store, music of the *sanshin*—a three-stringed instrument and the precursor of the mainland Japanese *shamisen*—could be heard, there were prepackaged meals in plastic dishes like *gōyā chanpurū* ("bitter melon stir fry") and *tako raisu* (taco rice) designated as "Okinawan cuisine", and paper headbands with a *shīsā* ("guardian lion") motif were being disturbed for free. As Hirasawa (2009) rather paternalistically notes: "Okinawans … used to face severe discrimination in Japanese society. However, they are perceived rather positively now because contemporary Japanese people have come to enjoy their music and find new value in their ways of living harmoniously with nature" (p. 160). In this way, inclusion is conditional and exceptional. See also Kawabata and Yamamoto's (2020) discussion about the tendency for multicultural policies in Japan to focus on making the "ethnic" Other palatable and consumable through the "3Fs" (i.e., food, fashion and festival).
9. For instance, Park-Kim (2020) writes that, in response to verbal and physical abuse, since the 2000s, students attending ethnic Korean schools have worn Japanese school uniforms during their commute, and then changed into their Korean school uniform after arriving at school.

10. In researching the strategies of younger Zainichi Koreans, Kim (1999) noted the flexible use of ethnic and *tsūmei* depending on the situation (see also Kawabata and Yamamoto, 2020).
11. The survey uses the word *dōseiaisha* (lit. same sex love person), which is translated here as homosexual.
12. Interestingly, only 14.3 per cent and 8.4 per cent of respondents indicated that they would not want "people of a different race" and "people who speak a different language", respectively, as neighbours. The author is unclear of the Japanese words used to describe these groups of people in this survey, but it does seem that they carried different assumptions for the respondents. The other groups of people listed, and associated percentage of "would not like to have as neighbours", are as follows: "Drug addicts" (98.8%); "people who have AIDS" (51.6%); "people of a different religion" (18.7%), and; "heavy drinkers (76.1%).
13. It is not clear if these same benefits and services are available to unmarried opposite-sex partners.
14. The low prevalence of *jijitsujō kon'in* (common law marriage) in Japan could be attributable to the fact that, among other differences in legal rights and protections, children born to these unions are legally registered as "illegitimate" and the mother is awarded sole custody (Fukuda, 2020).
15. A list comparing legal marriage, (heterosexual) common law marriage, and same-sex couples across a variety of situations is available on the Marriage for All Japan website: https://www.marriageforall.jp/en/marriage-equality/

Chapter 11 – Recommendations

11.1 For Japanese LGBT+ individuals

Based on the interviews with Japanese LGBT+ individuals, recommendations related to the following three issues will be elaborated upon: Workplace disclosure decision; potential outcomes of coming out; and job-seeking. These recommendations include illustrative stories from the interviewees. The intent of this section is not to impress upon individuals the “best way” to come out in the workplace or, indeed, that they should come out in the first place. Coming out at work may not be perceived as safe or necessary for some people who are LGBT+. If they do decide to come out, this research has shown that Japanese LGBT+ individuals want to be respected and taken seriously, and to be seen as more than just the stereotypes presented in mass media.

11.1.1 Bringing people in using the nemawashi approach

The qualitative inquiry highlighted that anxieties around coming out, within and outside the workplace, existed for many Japanese LGBT+ individuals. This is consistent with empirical research (e.g., Nijiiro Diversity: CSG, 2019; Japan LGBT Research Institute Inc., 2019). In Japan, for women, financial stability, and for men, career advancement, remain tied to heterosexual marriage (Ueno, 2021). Many older LGBT+ Japanese people have subscribed to the nuclear family model, supressing or compartmentalising their LGBT+ identity (Dasgupta, 2017; Sambe, 2020). On the surface, they present an image of “normalcy”, and are afforded a comfortable (and privileged) place within society and in the workplace. For example, Takeshi expressed great satisfaction in his job role as manager and trainer. He had been employed at the airline company for 26 years, and continued to support his wife and children while also dating a man. Meanwhile, younger LGBT+ Japanese people are able to access more information than ever before about SOGI diversity, and are more invested in identity politics. Yet, the choice remains the same: come out or fit in. Obviously, this binary is overly simplistic and, as already discussed, coming out is not an all-or-nothing process (e.g., Hill, 2009; Scott, 2018). Maybe more accurately, the choice is whether or not to enter heterosexual marriage and commence child-rearing activities. As Airi conceded, “it would be so much easier for me to be with a man. [I’m] not saying that from me personally: that's in society; in Japan; for my family; for everything”. Still, the participants who had come out to family overwhelmingly shared stories of support, although there was typically a “coming around” phase of up to several years involved. As for coming out in the workplace, the issue of timing was brought up in many of the interviews. As surmised by Yuki: “To state your sexuality on the first day of work: that's intimidating”. Because everyone is assumed to be cisgender and heterosexual, there is no “coming out” as cisgender or as straight. As such, there are no protocols or guidelines in place, either formally in writing or informally as part of workplace interaction, to direct the LGBT+ individual who is coming out or to direct those who are receiving the information. Lacking this roadmap, navigating the disclosure decision and its outcomes is highly personalised. However, a good starting point may be to float an idea or, as Rin put it, *nemawashi* (“lay the groundwork”). In the interview, and in her memoirs (Okabe, 2018), Rin detailed her coming out experience.

Released in July 2012, a special edition of *Shūkan Daiyamondo* magazine featured an interview with Itō Yoshihiro, executive director of Dentsu Diversity Lab. The company Rin was working for was a subsidiary of Dentsu Inc. She acquired the magazine and, after reading the interview, decided to contact Itō directly. Following email correspondence, they met several times. Then, she met with other members of the Dentsu Diversity Lab team, including Matsunaka Gon. Having heard stories of other trans people being fired, knowing that the parent company was engaged in LGBT-related initiatives gave Rin the confidence she needed to begin the process of coming out in her workplace. Finding a moment to be alone with her *jōshi* (boss), she presented a copy of her *seidōitseishōgai no shindansho* (GID medical certificate) and expressed her desire to live as a woman. Next, she disclosed to the human resources manager, and the accounting manager, whom she was close friends with. Her position as *sōmu buchō* (general manager) meant that she was quite visible in her workplace, and changes to her physical appearance and attire did not go unnoticed. Aware that people were speaking about her around her, rather than coming to her directly, she decided to address the entire company via the intranet. She sent out an email explaining her situation on a Friday in September 2012. At the end of the director’s meeting the following Monday, she was informed by her boss that the CEO had brought up the email during that morning’s board meeting. It took Rin by surprise to hear that the CEO expressed support by acknowledging the way she wanted to live. Her position in the company was secured, and despite continued prejudice and ignorance, she could comfortably be who she wanted to be in her workplace. Expressing an idea, building relationships, receiving feedback, and eventually reaching consensus, the *nemawashi* approach that Rin described could facilitate coming out, or rather “bringing people in”. A safe first step may be to seek information that explicates the company’s position on LGBT+ diversity, or diversity in general. This could be on the company website under CSR or D&I activities, in internal printed or digital communicated at an LGBT+ employee resource group (ERG), or otherwise, as Rin found, in a business magazine. Bringing up official company statements could be a way to open a dialogue around diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Failing to find any overt diversity-related communications or artefacts in the company, the employee could speak with a superior, a coworker, or human resources to gauge the level of understanding and support of LGBT+ issues. The information collected can be used to determine whether or not it is safe to come out and/or commence the transitioning process in the current workplace. It if is determined unsafe, the individual could decide to come out anyway and prepare for potential discrimination: microaggressions; harassment; dismissal. They could adopt a strategy of nondisclosure or delay their transition; this may not be ideal or sustainable, taking a mental toll on the individual. Otherwise they could decide to quit and seek out a more inclusive workplace; this may not be feasible and could be deleterious to long-term career goals. As in Rin's case, the process of information seeking and building networks with allies could involve many different parties and take several months. Bringing people in is about creating a space for acknowledgement and understanding on one's own terms, in one's own time. Coming out is not an all or nothing, one-and-done event; it's an ongoing conversation.

11.1.2 Understanding the outcomes of coming out

Japanese LGBT+ individuals who do want to come out in the workplace in Japan should be aware of potential unwanted outcomes. Beyond facing prejudice and ignorance, experiences of being expected to take on the role of educator and of being outed were reported in the current research. Firstly, those who come out in the workplace should anticipate taking on an educator role. They may face a daily onslaught of questions from coworkers and supervisors as the company's "token" LGBT+ employee (Taylor, 2013). Further, in service of the company's "diversity agenda", they may be asked to speak as an LGBT+ person at seminars or events, or tasked with the development and management of an employee resource group. Not wanting to expend time and effort to answer questions and develop his colleagues' understanding of LGBT+ issues, Hide had decided not to come out at work. For people who are LGBT+, having to talk about themselves and advocate for their "community" can be tiring and emotionally draining, and most likely beyond their official job role (Calvard et al., 2020; Catlin, 2021). In a study of FtM trans employees in Australia, Jones (2016) found that whilst a few of the participants found being an educational or social advocate in their workplace fulfilling, others were unwilling or unable to engage in self-advocacy, preferring to relinquish their gender history entirely. The current inquiry revealed that there were out LGBT+ employees who willingly took on the role of educator, and felt a sense of pride in that capacity. Again, being the "spokesperson" of SOGI diversity in the workplace should not be the sole responsibility of the LGBT+ employee. If one hasn't already been established, forming an ERG of LGBT+ individuals and allies, including line managers, could create a formal mechanism within the company for the dissemination of "correct knowledge". The LGBT+ ERG could act as a collective “voice” (Colgan & McKearney, 2012) in company-based publications or at events or training lectures.

Secondly, selective disclosure was practiced by many of the Study 1 participants. However, as discussed, disclosure to select individuals could inadvertently lead to non-consensual spread of information to others. A survey of 10,769 LGBT+ individuals conducted by Lifenet Insurance Company found that 25.1% of participants had experienced being outed (“Autingu, 25% ga keiken”, 2020).[1] Specific examples in the workplace included the boss that was consulted spreading the information and, in the case of trans employees, the gender on their *koseki* being leaked. In Japan, the potential consequences of outing LGBT+ individuals are beginning to reach public consciousness. After the suicide of a Hitotsubashi University student (see chapter 5, section 5.3.2), a local ordinance to ban outings was established in Kunitachi City, Tokyo in April 2018, and in April 2021, similar legislation was enacted in Mie Prefecture (“Mie ken”, 2021). And, as discussed in chapter 6 (section 6.2.2), under the revised Labour Measures Comprehensive Promotion Act, outing someone could be considered power harassment in the workplace (Teshima et al., 2021). However, having such bans in place may not prevent instances of outing, at least in the short term (Kahan, 2000). Bans may help to legitimise reporting and ensure adequate resources are subsequently made available to the person bringing the grievance forward. However, recognising the low incidence of rape being reported and the way rape is contextualised in Japan (see section 10.3.2), similar attitudes around outing, and a reluctance to report an outing incident could surface, especially if a power dynamic is involved. Too often it is left to the person who has been affected to proactively seek recourse. On the other hand, under certain circumstances, being outed could be advantageous. Georgie, who worked freelance in the fashion industry, believed that being introduced as “the gay one” was both attention-grabbing and memorable. In a study by Tindall and Waters (2012) that examined gay men’s career experiences in public relations in the context of U.S., some participants reported being stereotyped by colleagues and managers as “cool” and having “natural creative flair” as advantageous to their careers. In the construction of his professional identity, Georgie’s identity as a gay man was positioned front and centre. That being said, he recognised that, because of the nature of his work, he was afforded greater freedom to “be himself”. Overall, within the context of this research, outing is considered a harmful practice, and more awareness needs to be raised in order to mitigate incidences of outing LGBT+ individuals.

11.1.3 Finding the right fit

A final issue that elicited advice from the interviewees was related to job-seeking. Mizuki had just started a new job. She detailed how she navigated the application process and the interview process. As someone who did not wear skirts, she felt alienated by the performative aspect of job hunting, which conformed to a strict gender binary: “I refuse to wear skirts. Like, people even told me that you should wear a skirt because it presents you more feminine and you do look very strong”.[2] Prior to her current job, she had already completed some of the training for what she referred to as a “proper job”, but felt like she had pressured herself into applying for it based on perceived expectations (i.e., societal ideas of what success looks like). During the interview for that job, she had tried subtly to open a dialogue about her queer identity, but was unable to. Following that, she did not feel comfortable to disclose her sexuality. Her biggest concern was that she would “get used to being oppressed” by forcing herself into a work environment where she couldn’t be herself; something she had seen happen to a lot of her queer friends. Rejecting the “proper job”, Mizuki went on to work for a company a friend was already working for. When she asked her friend if they were out in the workplace, they replied that they were. In fact, they had talked about their LGBT+ identity during the interview stage. This was the deciding factor for Mizuki: knowing that she would be in a safe place. Ultimately, the workplace culture afforded her considerable flexibility and bodily autonomy. Mizuki was able to dress in a way she felt comfortable and keep her nose piercing, and she was actively encouraged not to wear makeup if she did not want to. On the second day at her current job, she was asked about her sexuality. She was able to open up because she felt that the employer was coming from a place of open curiosity and sincerity. Mizuki’s story illustrates that finding an inclusive workplace can be a significant consideration for LGBT+ individuals when seeking employment. As she put it: “I think [your] job is something that occupies most of your life, and you have to be really tactical about what you do in that sense, because that does make you up, you know? It is a part of you”. For younger LGBT+ people who are entering the workforce, or for older LGBT+ people looking for a career change, it is becoming easier in Japan to find employers that are the right fit. There are a growing number of organisations, including NPO ReBit and Niji Recruiting that offer a variety of services to support the careers of LGBT+ people.

Established in 2016, JobRainbow operates a website for matching LGBT+ job-seekers with LGBT-friendly companies and recruiters.[3] Navigating the website, the search function allows users to select from a dropdown menu of LGBT-friendly criteria. Every company or recruiter is given a “diversity score” based on the number of criteria they meet in each of the following five categories: “LGBT”; “Gender gap”; “Disability”; “Multicultural coexistence”; and “childcare/nursing”. Criteria for the LGBT category include having an antidiscrimination policy, same-sex partnership recognition, company-wide diversity training, undesignated “male” and “female” uniforms, ability to use chosen name, and the presence of an LGBT community. During the registration process, users can disclose information regarding their SOGI diversity by making selections from an extensive list, or inputting information freely. They can then decide whether or not to display this information on their profile, which can be toggled at any time. Following that, there is a page that asks users to select the extent of their experience coming out in the workplace (e.g., “anxious about coming out”; “came out to close coworkers or boss”). The next page asks if the user has a partner. They can select from the following four choices: “unanswered”; “partner (legal marriage)”; partner (common law marriage)”; and, “no partner”. Finally, there is a page that asks about concerns around use of shared spaces including toilets and locker rooms. All these pages specify that the registration process can be completed without answering. In contrast, more traditional *rirekisho* (curriculum vitae [CV]) typically include fields for “sex” and “marital status” that only provide binary options (i.e., “male/female”; “married/unmarried”). Overall, it seems that JobRainbow provides a more flexible and customisable approach to constructing a CV that specifically caters to the needs of LGBT+ job-seekers.

Knowing that the companies or recruiters vetted by JobRainbow will be equally sensitive to these needs could help LGBT+ individuals feel confident and safe during the job application process. At the same time, as Hide aptly pointed out, from the company perspective, sexuality is not a top priority. To a certain extent, some companies may be engaging in “diversity hire” practices, such as meeting industry mandated quotas. However, for the most part, they are looking for a specific set of skills and experience from potential candidates. Of course, during the hiring process discrimination based on sexual orientation can occur, as evidenced in experimental studies conducted in Sweden (Ahmed, et al., 2013), the UK (Drydakis, 2015), and the United States (Tilcsik, 2011), for instance. Therefore, bringing sexuality to the fore of the job-seeking process may not be important or helpful to the LGBT+ individual. On the other hand, Hide believed that it is necessary for trans people to take their gender diversity into consideration when seeking out employers to ensure they can find a workplace that meets their needs. This could be in relation to infrastructure such as toilets or locker rooms, and formal policies such as dress code and grooming requirements, as well as considerations when filling out documentation and allowing time off for surgery and recovery if necessary. That being said, there are trans people like Ken who transition completely before entering the workforce and consequently may not feel compelled or that it is necessary to explicitly reveal their trans history during job-seeking activities.

11.2 For LGBT+ expatriate individuals

In the interviews, the LGBT+ expatriate individuals conveyed an enthusiasm to live and work in Japan. For many, living in Japan was the dream; a dream that had been cultivated from a young age through exposure to Japanese products, media, and language in formal and informal settings. Upon entering Japan, they were driven to learn, to grow, and to thrive, both professionally and personally. The experiences described by the LGBT+ expatriate individuals were more often than not framed through the lens of their foreigner identity. Certainly, being expatriates who were also LGBT+ entailed unique opportunities and challenges. However, it was their co-constructed *gaijin* subjectivities that defined their positionality in Japanese society. As such, constructing identity in a new environment, bridging the cultural and linguistic gap through studies, and making Japan home are the three themes explored below. Among the couples interviewed (C cohort), Selena and Elsa were unique in that they were single when they first expatriated to Japan; they met and became a couple much later. As such, their experiences will be shared in the recommendations sections for LGBT+ expatriate individuals as well as for LGBT+ expatriate couples/families.

11.2.1 Starting from scratch

Like the Japanese LGBT+ individuals (J cohort), LGBT+ expatriate individuals (E cohort) had to grapple with the disclosure decision. However, in contrast to the J cohort, those of the E cohort were much further removed from their families and communities. Many of the participants experienced a new-found freedom in Japan, and were able to "start from scratch" (Carlos) when constructing their identities.[4] Arguably, an individual who has access to the privilege of moving overseas for educational endeavours or employment, even for a short time, may gain new insights about themselves. For the E cohort, expatriation represented an opportunity to experiment and develop new ways to present and relate to others. Being "really far away from my parents" Skye was able to come out in her first year living in Japan. Similarly, Selena felt that moving to Japan and being away from "overbearing" parents helped her to "come into my identity". This wasn't necessarily an outcome of expatriating to Japan specifically. Selena averred that it had more to do with "being separate [from family], in a new place where you don't know anyone". Meanwhile, Leonardo talked about being able to express himself through fashion, "far away from my parents and my country". Walking down the street wearing "girl's clothes" for the first time was daunting;

Leonardo had taken a leap of faith. However, the experience proved to be liberating. Through fashion, Leonardo was able to connect with people and place, participating in events such as the "Harajuku Fashion Walk". A critique of the division of "men's" clothes and "women's" clothes, this event championed genderless fashion and created a safe space for freedom of expression. Able to feel safe and confident in Japan, Leonardo cultivated a mindset of authenticity, something that he wanted to maintain in the workplace: "I wanted to still be able to, yeah express myself even if I had to go to work, because that was something that I wanted to fight, meaning: I don't think I would change myself for somebody else, even if that meant that I wouldn't get the job".

Carlos talked about his home life in Panama. Despite reassurance from his mother that he would be accepted regardless of his sexuality, Carlos was not open about his bisexuality to anyone in his family. He felt that if he did come out, the men in his family, specifically his father and step-father would shun him or try to "convert" him. Carlos supposed that this was because they harboured an "old-style" mentality rooted in the traditional values and ideas typical of people born and raised in Latin American countries. He then went on to contrast the "open minded" and developed Japan to developing Panama. As already discussed in chapter 8 (section 8.3.2.1), country comparison was a highly prevalent feature of the E cohort interviews. As with many of the other expatriate participants, with regards to sexuality, Carlos felt safer in Japan, when compared to his home country:

> I feel like it is always more difficult in your home turf because you live there, at the very least, in regular cases, for over 20 years or more. So you have this whole network of connections and people you live with and that you know, regardless of what you think of them. And then having to come out of the closet or having to quote unquote rebuild where you are. It's more taxing for an individual than just having to go to another country, where you basically start from scratch the moment you step out of the airport.

The reality is, worldwide, many people who are LGBT+ face violence in their daily lives because of their gender(s) and/or sexuality. They must contend with the fact that they could be subject to verbal and physical assault, criminal prosecution, and disownment by family, and in the workplace, harassment, demotion, and dismissal. Expatriation is a privilege that many people do not have access to for a variety of socioeconomic reasons. For those who are able, Japan seems to be a good option for people who are LGBT+, at least in terms of overall safety in day-to-day life. Although the participants did not expressly state that safety was a primary factor in their decision to move to Japan, they were nonetheless appreciative of it.

11.2.2 Studying (in) Japan

The experiences of those in the E cohort showed that coming to Japan as a student can act as a bridging or transitory phase in the expatriation process. Petra, Carlos, and Leonardo had initially arrived in Japan on student visas; Leonardo went to a language school and Petra and Carlos went to *senmongakkō* ("technical college") for media and creative writing respectively. Becoming a student for visa purposes could include enrolling in a language school, technical college, or an undergraduate or graduate program at a university. According to the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), there were 279,597 international students in Japan as of May 1, 2020, down from 2019, but representing a 170 per cent increase since 2011 (JASSO, 2021).[5] Those holding a student visa are able to seek employment and work up to 28 hours per week (Immigration Services Agency of Japan, n.d.b). While this is much lower than the average—38.5 hours in 2019 (Keidanren, 2020)—attaining a part-time job could nonetheless lead to the development of workplace bonds and networking opportunities.[6] In the case of Carlos, he was able to successfully negotiate a work visa sponsorship for a full-time position from his employer while still on his student visa. Even before arriving in Japan, several of the participants in the E cohort had actively been studying the Japanese language and culture in secondary and tertiary education. Elsa had studied Japanology in Germany, and came to Japan on a working holiday to "test out" her Japanese. Petra studied Japanese in high school and had a field trip to Japan in 2011. Like many in the E cohort, Carlos had achieved Japanese fluency after living in Japan. He used Japanese daily at his place of work. Conversely, Elsa felt that her Japanese language ability had actually declined since arriving in Japan: "I did another *eikaiwa* ("English language school") job and I spoke English the whole time. I went home and I saw people in the sharehouse, I spoke English; there was no improvement. And I feel like now it's even worse, like my Japanese is so bad now". Elsa expressed disappointment in having not achieved her goal of increasing fluency. Highlighted here is the unevenness of Japanese language immersion in Japan; immersion should not be assumed as automatic or universal. Language spoken in work and home environments especially can either help or hinder efforts to improve language ability. Operating in an "English bubble", as was the case for Elsa despite her intentions, expatriates may feel they are making little progress. Language fluency can be seen as a personal goal driven by an intrinsic motivation to study and communicate with people in the target language; skill mastery is the reward in and of itself. Language fluency can also have more externally rewarding outcomes, such as positioning a job applicant as more or less qualified for a position.

An analysis of two Tokyo-based job websites conducted by Nikkei indicated that, of around 18,000 job offers for foreign specialists listed on their websites in late November 2020, seventy-five per cent stipulated that the applicant have Japanese language skills corresponding at least to the highest N1 level on the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (Lang, 2022).[7] However, of the 9,000 job seekers registered with the website, only 37 per cent had an N1 qualification. Similarly, an analysis of 14 online job boards including Gaijinpot found that, of the job listings that included necessary level of Japanese, a majority (77%) specified N2 or N1 (Japan Switch, 2021).[8] A positive relationship between average salary and Japanese ability was also discerned. Jobs that required "no Japanese" were mostly limited to those found in the IT and English Teaching industries. As previously discussed, Japan is facing a severe labour shortage, especially in highly skilled positions, one that is projected only to worsen in the future. Foreign labour provides one solution to addressing this shortage. A survey that targeted 600 HR managers (*jinji tantōsha*) across six industries conducted by Meiko Global found that 70.5 per cent of HR managers felt that they were experiencing a labour shortage, particularly of engineers (Meiko Network Japan, 2021). Despite this, it was found that only 16.5 per cent were hiring foreigner labour "aggressively" (*sekkyokuteki ni*). Forty-eight per cent of respondents cited "language and communication concerns" as the reason for not hiring foreign talent. Here, there is a clear mismatch between demanding Japanese language proficiency and filling key positions. Language remains a salient barrier to globalisation efforts in Japan. A national survey conducted by Rakuten Research (2016) found that 69.9 per cent of respondents felt that they were poor at English, and 74.2 per cent felt that English proficiency among Japanese people is low. Another national survey conducted by English Style (2018) reported similar results: "no ability at all" (31.5%); "beginner level" (53.7%); "intermediary level" (13.1%); and "advanced level" (1.7%). Data from the 2020 TOEFL Test, which assessed all four language skills (i.e., reading, listening, speaking, and writing), indicate that the total mean score for examinees in Japan was 73, the lowest score among the 28 Asian countries with published results (Educational Testing Service, 2020).[9] Finally, in 2021, the EF English Proficiency Index (EPI) ranked 112 countries and regions by English skills based on the results from a free, online test. Japan was ranked 78th, in other words "low proficiency", in an apparent downward trend (Education First, 2021).[10] Expatriates considering Japan as a host country should anticipate the necessity of Japanese language acquisition, including reading comprehension (e.g., for email correspondence, official documents, and websites etc.), to facilitate and navigate workplace and day-to-day interactions.

For LGBT+ expatriate individuals, gaining proficiency in the Japanese language through study and immersion has the potential to propel them toward the positions they want: David was able to become CTO of an IT start-up and Ashton had just been promoted to assistant manager in product planning for a major automotive company. Findings from the author's master's thesis indicated that language facilitated better intercultural competence (Anderson, 2017); language facilitates communication, communication facilitates trust, and trust facilitates opportunities. On the other hand, research conducted in Japan has suggested that having a shared language may also act as an obstacle to mutual understanding, and that linguistically proficient expatriates may be criticised more harshly than those without language proficiency when engaging in culturally incongruent behaviour (Peltokorpi, 2010). Beyond the workplace, having Japanese language ability can help LGBT+ expatriates connect with other Japanese speakers in local queer spaces both physical and online: in bars, clubs and community centres, and on dating apps and online forums. Arguably, as explored in this research, LGBT+ expatriate couples may be less motivated to learn Japanese as they already have a support network and shared language at home and may not be planning to stay in Japan for very long. Meanwhile, LGBT+ expatriate individuals may be more motivated to learn Japanese, especially if they have aspirations to work for a Japanese company, find a partner, and live in Japan long-term.

11.2.3 Making Japan home

On the 15th of December 2021, a member of the Tokyo Expat Network (TEN), a private group on Facebook, submitted a post that asked the following questions: "Who thinks about leaving Japan for good and why? How long have you been here?" Within 5 hours the post had garnered 178 comments, and engagement with the post peaked at around two days; there were a total 366 comments within the week. The researcher sought to capture and transform the raw data produced by this post in order to gain an understanding of expatriate experiences in Japan. Firstly, there are three distinct questions evident in this post:

1. Who is thinking about leaving Japan permanently;
2. What are their reason(s) for leaving Japan; and
3. How long have they been living in Japan?

In total, comments from 96 respondents were deemed to be valid (i.e., the respondent adequately answered at least one of these questions). At this point, a few caveats should be noted. First, this informal "survey" needs to be considered within the context of the current global climate: chiefly, at the time of writing, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent travel restrictions had ramifications for local economies, as well as the movement of global labour.

As such, it could be seen as an especially taxing time for expatriates who wanted to return to their home country. Further, country comparison was coloured by how Japan was perceived to be handling the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, the nature of the Facebook post was such that people commenting could read the responses of everyone—and know the identity of everyone—who had already responded. In this way, when compared to a traditional anonymous survey, response bias may be much higher. Relatedly, the questions themselves were worded in such a way as to elicit responses from people who wanted to vent their frustrations about Japan. Third, for the purposes of this analysis the respondents were treated as a “generic” expatriate: that is, social identity categories such as age, gender, and sexuality, were not taken into consideration. The following is an overview of the socio-demographic indicators that could be readily gathered from the comments to the post: the respondents came from at least 14 different countries, including Estonia, Germany, India, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, and the United States; at least 13 had expatriated with their partner and/or children; at least 11 had married a Japanese national; at least three were of mixed Japanese heritage; regarding the third question above, eight of the respondents had repatriated after living in Japan for an average of nine and a half years (n = 7) and the remaining 88 respondents had been living in Japan for an average of 12 years (n = *53*). Fourth, it was assumed that all respondents could be considered an “expatriate” as defined by this research.

When deciding how to parse the data into more manageable units, it was initially envisaged that the respondent’s comments would be sorted into the following three categories: “already left Japan”; “thinking about leaving”; and “not thinking about leaving”. This process proved to be futile as there was a lack of definitive answers from many of the respondents. Certainly, there were some emphatic comments along the lines of “I never want to leave” and “I plan to die here [in Japan]”, as well as “thinking about leaving every day” and “can’t wait to go back to my home country…” that clearly communicated the respondent’s desire to stay in or to leave Japan. Of course, desire does not necessarily lead to action. As one respondent aptly put it, “I can't think why someone wouldn't occasionally think about leaving. Reassessing one's surroundings every now and then is wise”. Therefore, rather than focusing on desire to stay or leave, “reasons for staying” and “reasons for leaving” became the primary themes for coding purposes. Subsequent coding followed the same logic as the coding of the “four core questions” as outlined in chapter 9 (section 9.4.2). Comments from 80 respondents were coded. Some respondents provided a single reason, while others provided multiple; each reason was considered a separate code. A total of 191 codes were sorted into eight categories (see table 11.1). During the coding process, it became

Table 11.1 Themes and categories abstracted from analysis of TEN group post

Theme	Category (number of codes)				Total
Reasons to leave	**Interaction (25)**	Child rearing (15)	Compensation (6)	**Relationships (24)**	122
	Daily life (18)	Career (15)	Quality of life (15)	Looking outward (4)	
Reasons to stay	Interaction (3)	Child rearing (6)	Compensation (4)	Relationships (6)	69
	Daily life (26)	Career (5)	Quality of life (8)	Looking outward (11)	
				Total	191

evident each of the categories could be represented in both "reasons to stay" and "reasons to leave". For example, in the category "looking outward"—which included reasons that considered things outside of Japan—there were codes such as "miss friends and food" (reasons to leave) and "dumpster fire mess in UK" (reasons to stay). Overall, salient "reasons to leave" included being treated like an outsider, not wanting to put children in the Japanese education system, uncompetitive salary, wanting to be closer to parents, and a lack of opportunities to advance career. Meanwhile, safety and convenience, and reflecting on the state of the rest of the world constituted significant "reasons to stay". Many of the respondents called Japan home, articulating both the pros and the cons of living in Japan as an expatriate. In summary, recognising that this was a non-probability "community-based" sample and that the sample size was very small, generalisability is limited. However, this does not mean that the analysis was without merit. Highlighted here is a novel avenue for collecting qualitative data. Facebook groups such as TEN provide an important resource for members, creating a space for discourse, inquiry, and peer learning opportunities. Tapping into these spaces may provide unfiltered glimpses into the lived experiences of members as well as facilitate deeper exploration of social phenomena. With regards to the current inquiry, although this research is primarily focused on workplace experiences, it is clear that there are many factors outside the workplace that influence people's decisions whether to stay in Japan, as well as factors outside of the workplace (e.g., COVID-19) that are beyond the control of the individual and directly impact their ability to continue to live and work in Japan. With this in mind, it seems important that both employers and expatriates adopt a holistic approach when considering the expatriation process.

Despite disagreeing with many things, Petra called Japan home. During the interview she laid out her future plans: to have her own clients; to own a dog and a house with a little garden; and at the end of the day, to sit on the porch in sweatpants drinking beer and patting the dog; a "*hima no onna*". For LGBT+ expatriate individuals wanting to make Japan home, there are unique challenges that are outside the purview of the workplace. LGBT+ expatriate individuals may come to Japan and find a partner. This was the case for Renata. At the time of writing, all states in Mexico either allowed the performance of same-sex marriages, or recognised same-sex marriages performed in other states. Hypothetically, Renata and Yuki could have gotten married in Mexico City. However, their marriage would not have been recognised in Japan. A Taiwanese national who had been living with his Japanese partner in Chiba Prefecture for over 20 years was ordered to leave Japan in 2016 after overstaying his visa (Osumi, 2019; Teshima, 2021). In March 2017, he filed a lawsuit with the Tokyo District Court claiming that he should have been granted special permission to stay, citing his sexuality as the only factor preventing him from receiving a spousal visa. Subsequently, in 2019, the deportation order was revoked by the Justice Ministry, and he was able to become a *teijūsha* ("permanent resident"). In an NHK World-Japan program, Lawyer Nagano Yasushi, who represented the Taiwanese man, points out the lack of discourse around the recognition and support for binational same-sex couples in Japan (NHK, 2021). Simply put: a married "opposite-sex" couple in which one person is Japanese and one is not are able to apply for a dependent visa (their marriage is recognised in Japan); a married same-sex couple in which both people are not Japanese are able to apply for a designated activities visa (their relationship is recognised in Japan),[11] however; a married same-sex couple in which one person is Japanese and one is not Japanese are not able to apply for a dependent/spousal visa (their overseas marriage is not recognised in Japan). For binational couples, this inequity has potentially distressing consequences. In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, some married binational couples had become separated as re-entry into Japan was not permitted to those not recognised as family. As it stands, the system is failing binational same-sex couples in Japan, and ultimately hurting the longevity of the participation of LGBT+ expatriate individuals in the Japanese labour force. Until marriage equality is achieved in Japan, or otherwise laws expand to recognise same-sex relationships without marriage (e.g., common law marriage), cases like that of the Taiwanese and Japanese couple will remain the exception, rather than the rule.

11.3 For LGBT+ expatriate couples/families

In the interviews the couples were asked what advice they would give to other LGBT+ couples wanting to expatriate to Japan. This was also a question in the short-answer survey. The advice could be distilled into four distinct categories: do your research; sort out visa situation; adjust expectations; and find community. These categories are self-explanatory, covering practical, attitudinal, and health and well-being considerations. Here, “do your research” and “adjust expectations'' will be considered together, as the former can be seen as an antecedent to the later. All three of the recommendations elaborated upon below can be implemented ahead of expatriation.

11.3.1 Contacting a lawyer

While it is possible for LGBT+ couples to expatriate to Japan on independent work visas, most couples in the C cohort arrived as a unit. In the case of the opposite sex couples, one person arrived on a work visa, and the other on a dependant visa. Meanwhile, in the case of the same-sex couples, one person arrived on a work visa and the other on a short-term stay visa with the intent of applying for a change of status to the designated activities (DA) visa. Ahead of expatriating, the couple should consider consulting with a Japan-based lawyer that specifically deals with matters of immigration. A relationship can be established through email correspondence. The lawyer will be able to explain exactly what paperwork is required—this will vary depending on the nationality of the applicant—and will be able to liaise with the employer as necessary, as well as with the immigration bureau, submitting paperwork on behalf of the couple. Depending on the lawyer or firm, multiple languages may be available. The first step may be speaking directly with the employer to assess how much they know about the visa application process. The research found that some employers were knowledgeable and supportive, while other employers were not willing or able to offer any support regarding visa matters. Failing employer support, the couple should connect with a lawyer directly, and factor in legal fees as part of the expatriation cost. The couple should also allocate ample time to gather all necessary documentation, and be aware that they may need to involve others in the process. For example, in response to someone’s question about applying for a visa as a same-sex couple that was posted on the Stonewall Japan Facebook group, Jack explained that he and his husband sent photographs, wrote statements, and his husband's mother wrote a letter asking that the DA visa be approved; he also pointed out that the individual with the work-related visa must be able to prove that they can financially support the couple.

To be recognised as a couple in order to apply for a dependent (spousal) visa or the DA visa, a marriage certificate is required—Noriko did mention that unmarried couples (same-sex or opposite-sex) can technically apply for the DA visa, but in this case it should be seen as a "last resort" option. Therefore unmarried couples wanting to expatriate to Japan need to consider the possibility of marriage and, if they do decide to get married, may need to make arrangements promptly. For example, Wolfgang and Tobias registered their marriage just weeks before arriving to Japan. They were not able to register at the city hall in Vienna where they resided, as it was "booked out for the next two months". Instead, they were able to register in Tobias's hometown. For same-sex couples from different countries, same-sex marriage must be recognised in both countries, and marriage certificates from both countries will be required; this requirement is the same for opposite-sex couples. The marriage certificates may also need to be translated. Noriko explained that having dependents (e.g., children) can complicate matters, as the DA visa acts, in the case of a couple, as a kind of proxy dependent visa: the DA visa holder cannot be the primary applicant for the child(ren)'s visa. Jack emphasised the fact that while his company helped him secure his child's visa—recognising Jack as the child's guardian—the company did not help with securing his husband's visa. Additionally, those with a dependent visa can, in most cases, apply for permission to work up to 28 hours a week. Meanwhile, DA visa holders cannot. Upon finding a job, Lionel had to apply for change of status to a work-related visa. Finally, it is vitally important to understand that the time between the DA visa application and receiving an answer from the immigration bureau may be up to several months. The application may even be rejected. For many of the couples, waiting for the answer and the uncertainty that surrounded it proved to be stressful, directly impacting their relationship. The couple or family should work to develop and implement coping strategies to move through this potentially difficult time.

11.3.2 Coming armed with information

Many couples spoke about the incongruity between their image of Japan and the reality that they faced once they had actually expatriated. They expressed that in their home countries, talking about Japan conjured up words like "(technologically) advanced", "innovative", "modern", and "exotic". For them, the discrepancy between being a tourist in Japan and being a resident of Japan quickly became evident. Amando reflected on the time he and Nathan came to Japan on a two week holiday, likening the hospitality to being "treated like [a] god". In contrast, because they did not have the necessary information and did not receive the necessary support, their expatriation experience was taxing and was ultimately cut short. Their advice was concise and empathic: "Do your research!" The LGBT+ expatriate couples drew on a variety of resources for information, and also became a source of information themselves. For example, as part of their research efforts, Sebastian and Lionel watched a YouTube channel in which a Japanese woman and her Spanish husband talked about their daily life in Japan. While they found the videos informative and engaging, they felt that overall the content was "too straight". They wanted to create their own YouTube channel, offering their perspectives and insight as a gay couple from a developing country living in Japan. They intended to speak in Spanish with English subtitles. Meanwhile, Tobias had a German language podcast series, with episodes touching on a plethora of topics relevant to his time in Japan ranging from culture shock and cultural differences to diet, fitness, weather, and going to the supermarket. Producing a podcast, a blog, or a vlog, not only affords expatriates the opportunity to reflect on their time and reassess their expectations, but also, if publicly available, can be an important resource for prospective expatriates. This is a space where more LGBT+ voices would be beneficial. Lacking official guidance or support from the government or their employer, LGBT+ expatriate couples are accessing the extant community through Facebook groups. For example, an incoming expatriate made a post on Stonewall Japan asking for advice regarding obtaining a DA visa for his husband. This prompted a call in the comments section to create a document that clearly outlined the application process and the paperwork required as a resource for LGBT+ expatriate couples wanting to go down the DA visa route. LGBT+ expatriate couples could also seek out content creators, especially those who are culturally and linguistically matched, with on-the-ground expatriate experience in Japan. This could help couples recognise the ways in which Japan will be different, both in terms of value and belief systems and in day-to-day life, and in turn adjust their expectations accordingly.

Of course, tapping into the community is not without its drawbacks. Receiving lots of "bad advice" on the Internet almost dissuaded Jack and Roy from expatriating to Japan altogether. In particular, many couples advised that it was important to research housing options and rent protocols in advance. Considering the fact that this is where the couple or family will spend most of their time together, finding a place that is comfortable and that meets everyone's needs could be a top priority. Unlike expatriate individuals, who may be content with a figure-it-out-as-I-go approach when it comes to accommodation, LGBT+ expatriate couples will be making decisions together and may also be responsible for children. In lieu of stability and assurance, rejection and lack of options could catch them off guard. Beyond an understanding of the upfront costs involved, and preparing accordingly, LGBT+ expatriate couples should be aware of the routine discrimination practiced by landlords. There are companies like Tokyo-based IRIS that specialise in providing support for LGBT+ couples seeking a place to live.[12] Also, some companies may provide housing. This was the case for Amando and Nathan, and it was an option available to Tobias and Wolfgang, at least temporarily, if they hadn't been able to find an apartment in advance. This research indicated that most LGBT+ expatriate couples got in contact with a real estate agent and looked at housing options in their own time. Therefore, after deciding on potential properties, couples should expeditiously seek confirmation from their agent regarding the availability of those properties, and anticipate cases of rejection. This is not to say that LGBT+ expatriate couples should come to Japan expecting to be treated poorly at every turn. Rather, cultivating realistic expectations regarding the challenges as well as the rewards of expatriation could help to mitigate negative psychological outcomes. Pre-departure training may or may not be available, and, even if it is available, may not be sufficient if it does not consider the intersection of SOGI diversity. By arming themselves with information, LGBT+ expatriate couples can dispel preconceptions, challenge assumptions, and ensure that nothing is taken for granted.

11.3.3 Developing a support network

Leaving one's home country for an extended period of time leads to many changes in the expatriate's life, including their social life. Away from family and friends, finding a new community, a new support network, is both challenging and rewarding. Before expatriating, LGBT+ expatriate couples should have a conversation about their social needs. This may be the first time for the couple to have this kind of conversation. Some individuals may enjoy socialising as a couple at all times, while other individuals may need friendships and networks independent of their partners. Individuals will also exhibit varying levels of closeness to their family: more or less reliant on family for support; and more or less frequently in contact with family. One or both of the individuals could experience feelings of homesickness, or feelings of loss, after expatriating. Elsa and Selena both agreed that Elsa was the more homesick of the two of them. Considering this research, it seems that those who are not working, those who are "left at home", are more likely to exhibit feelings of withdrawal. The individual who goes to work is afforded the chance to interact with superiors, coworkers, and/or clients by default. Meanwhile, the individual who stays at home must proactively create opportunities to interact with others, and may end up just waiting for their partner to return. After their respective partners had started working, Lionel and Tobias both talked about spending a lot of time in their apartments alone. Feelings of isolation were exacerbated by the language barrier. In this research, the C cohort was found to be, on average, less proficient at Japanese than the E cohort. Expecting to reside in Japan only temporarily, learning the language was not a priority, particularly for the employed partner; they prioritised work commitments over language learning classes. For the non-working partner wanting to immerse themselves in the Japanese language, getting involved in activities that they are already familiar with may be a good starting point. For instance, Nathan took classes at a local gym, which were conducted in Japanese. Although the language aspect was frustrating, since he had previous experience as a gym instructor, he was still able to understand enough and enjoy the classes while also interacting with others who attended.

There are also communities based around non-Japanese languages, including English-speaking communities made up of foreigners and Japanese people. LGBT+ expatriate couples can access LGBT+ individuals and groups that speak different languages, especially in Tokyo. Before expatriating, connections can be established with people in Japan using communication technologies, such as social media platforms and location-based social apps. For example, on Scruff, a social application for men seeking men, the "Venture" service includes a chat function that connects users to local "ambassadors". This presents an opportunity for LGBT+ expatriate couples to connect with locals, including fellow expatriates who, as ambassadors, have explicitly agreed to answering questions. Facebook groups such as Tokyo Expat Network and Stonewall Japan provide a space to seek advice, ask for recommendations, enquire about resources, and receive updates about various news and events. When it comes to communicating, the Internet has rendered geographic location effectively obsolete. Yet, it does not guarantee the promise of meaningful connection. Even without the language barrier, it may take time to develop networks of support, as Sarah and Grace explained. Finding the right fit could mean asking questions about what kinds of people you want in your life. This research elucidated that, expatriating as a unit, support from the other person was built in. One of the categories that came out of analysis of the four core questions was "testing bonds", which consisted of five "challenging" codes and 14 "rewarding" codes. Many couples expressed that the expatriation experience had strengthened their relationship, promoting teamwork, communication, and valuing time together. However, concerns of co-dependency and fulfilment mismatch were also voiced. LGBT+ expatriate couples should recognise that, at least in the short term, the amount of socialising and the mode of interaction that they were used to in their home country may abruptly change. In order to cushion this abrupt change, couples should consider proactively reaching out and forming connections ahead of expatriating. Along with preparing for the job, contacting a lawyer, looking for housing, and gathering paperwork, making connections should be part of the pre-departure process for LGBT+ couples expatriating to Japan.

11.4 For allies, researchers, and practitioners

Throughout this text, the voices of people who are LGBT+ living and working in Japan have been heard. The participants were students, teachers, managers, researchers, artists, musicians, lawyers, and programmers, and their places of work were as diverse as they were. As discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.1.3) above and beyond workplace policies, supportive climate has been empirically shown to lead to positive outcomes for LGBT+ employees. Therefore, rather than merely prescribing a list of policies to be administered top-down by managers, these recommendations will focus on how to foster an inclusive workplace climate, not just for queer people, but for all employees. Further, beyond applicability in a generic *ōtekigyō* ("large corporation") setting, solutions will be presented that can be scaled in relation to the size and resources of the business. As research (see, for example, MHLW, 2020), including the current inquiry, has demonstrated, smaller businesses are less likely to have implemented LGBT-related initiatives compared with larger businesses. This is an opportunity for the author to reflect on the research process, and to develop tools that can be used by everybody in their daily lives. To be clear, fundamental, systemic change is necessary. As the current inquiry has illuminated, systems of privilege and oppression are supported by deeply entrenched ideologies and structural inequalities that exist across all social institutions. A grand design for sweeping change will not be realised here. The focus remains squarely on the individual and what they can do as an ally, as a researcher, or as a practitioner when interfacing intersectionally with people who are LGBT+. Overall, these recommendations represent the ideal, and assume that key organisational actors, including HR and top management, have the interests of LGBT+ people at the heart of their decision-making processes. In reality, for-profit enterprise will, understandably, prioritise profits, especially in the short-term. When considering SOGI diversity in the workplace, drawing on established best practices could constitute the first step. For example, the PRIDE Index (work with Pride, 2021) or the list of regulations presented by Tokyo Ometesando Law & Accounting LPS in *Kēsu sutadi shokuba no LGBT* (Ed. Terahara, 2018) could be used to guide the rollout or expansion of LGBT-related policies. At the bare-minimum, businesses, including SMEs, in Japan should, in line with revised labour laws (see section 6.2.2), implement a harassment prevention policy that explicitly defines the scope and harm of outing LGBT+ people, and provides robust reporting and remediation mechanisms (for example see Teshima et al., 2021), as well as company-wide education. This SOGI diversity education needs to be more than a mandatory e-learning module or a one-and-done seminar. A philosophy of continual learning should pervade the very culture of the organisation. It will be argued here that one of the ways to facilitate this learning is through shared vulnerability. To begin, it is important to clarify what exactly is meant by “shared vulnerability”.

In her review of vulnerability in higher education, Jackson (2018) locates vulnerability within individuals and groups, as well as within systems. She notes how, in neoliberal and psychological framings, vulnerability in the individual is often understood as a negative affective state: being susceptible to risk, disease, job stress, etc. To be in a position of vulnerability, then, is something to be avoided. “Vulnerable population” comes to define a group of people that are suffering, deficient, and in need of outside intervention. However, viewed critically, this vulnerability is not a “natural” characteristic or an *a priori* position of a group or otherwise a personal choice of an individual. Rather, it is a product of systems of privilege and oppression and is experienced in the daily relationships between people, as well as in relation to socio-institutional structures. In this way, vulnerability can be understood as relational. Further, in contrast to common sense understandings of vulnerability as weakness, a philosophical view sees vulnerability as an opportunity to learn and grow. Gilson (2011) introduces the concept of *epistemic vulnerability* as fostering an openness to:

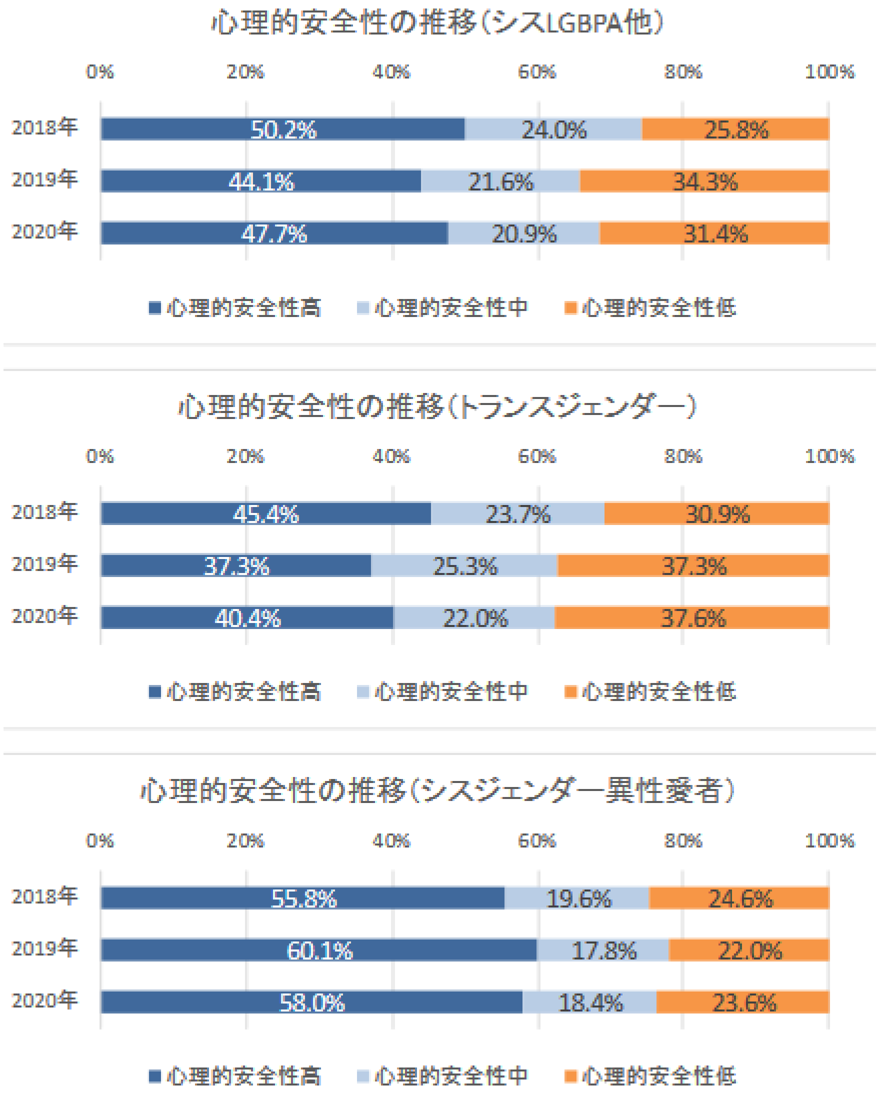
1. not knowing (as a precondition to learning);
2. being wrong and expressing one’s ideas nonetheless (rather than closing off and not engaging in dialogue);
3. putting oneself in and learning from situations in which one is the Other (accepting the genuine value of discomfort);
4. understanding and incorporating emotional and bodily responses in light of new knowledge (letting the knowledge really “sink in”); and
5. altering one’s self and sense of one’s self (allowing new knowledge to shape behaviour and identity as a continually evolving person).

Meanwhile, reflecting on her journey as a Japanese, feminist, early-career academic abroad, Matsuoka (2017) argues for “embracing vulnerability” as a way to (re)frame obstacles and challenges as learning moments. This positive view of vulnerability has been criticised for its focus on the individual benefits of vulnerability while obscuring systemic injustices that result from the uneven distribution of vulnerability (e.g., Cole, 2016). Thus, in advocating for a more nuanced understanding of vulnerability, Jackson (2018) synthesises the learning potential of vulnerability with the relational dimension of vulnerability: “[The problem] is not vulnerability precisely, but how it is experienced differently across individuals … and differently across systems” (p. 233). Shared vulnerability, then, refers to a more equitable (re)distribution of vulnerability, in this case, across the organisation, such that vulnerability can be a transformative force, rather than an oppressive one.

Arguably, in Japan, people who are LGBT+ are among the most vulnerable in the workplace, especially at the intersections of gender, age, marital status, and nationality. This paper has demonstrated that, as a group, LGBT+ people are both emotionally and economically vulnerable. Consider the disclosure decision. To come out as bi or as trans, for instance, means to put oneself in a position of relative vulnerability. Cisnormativity and heteronormativity create an environment where being cisgender and heterosexual is the unspoken default. As such, conversations around sexuality or gender identity are not normalised. At the same time, in this research, conversations around heteronormative dating, marriage, and family were found to be normalised, and were especially prominent during, but not limited to, *nomikai*. Spending time with colleagues and supervisors outside work should be an opportunity to blow off steam, bond, and raise morale. Instead, for the participants who did attend, *nomikai* represented unsafe spaces where participants, those unmarried in particular, had to be on their guard and navigate unwanted questions and conceal truths. The top-down, legislative response to such issues around privacy has been to strengthen and broaden the scope of harassment. Both Ashton and Hide, assistant manager and director of HR, respectively, spoke about how questions about one's personal life could be considered under the purview of sexual harassment and power harassment policy in their companies. An attempt to suppress all communication, including constructive communication, about gender and sexuality in the workplace is, on the one hand, difficult to regulate and enforce in the first place, especially during *nomikai*. On the other hand, only telling people what *not* to do and what *not* to say, rather than empowering individuals to make choices about how to interact, may instead fuel resentment toward and eventual backlash against those whom the policies are intended to "protect". Telling people they cannot call someone a "*homo*", or that they cannot ask people about having a "boyfriend" because "it might hurt them", is unhelpful; people need to learn the histories of LGBT struggle and oppression. Examining survey reports in chapter 5 (section 5.2.1) revealed that many people did not know how to communicate about LGBT issues or how to be considerate of people who are LGBT+. Indeed, the ignorance of others with regards to SOGI diversity was brought up by some of the participants as a point of frustration. Framing invulnerability as wilful ignorance, a basis of oppression, Gilson (2011) sees epistemic vulnerability as a process that "makes learning, and thus a reduction of ignorance, possible" (p. 324). Evidently, to experience vulnerability is especially important for those in dominant groups. While Gilson (2016) sees value in epistemic vulnerability for all, she notes that it “is more appropriately demanded of those who are relatively privileged precisely because they have likely not already found themselves in situations in which they are the unknowing, uncomfortable, and nondominant party” (p. 311). Thus, those who have experienced, or otherwise live with vulnerability on a daily basis, namely nondominant groups including LGBT+, are uniquely situated as well versed in the ways of vulnerability. This is an instance where non-LGBT+ people could learn from LGBT+ people.

For the author, “sharing” vulnerability involves creating an environment in which all individuals feel safe to express themselves honestly, without fear of judgement. This can, and *should*, involve some level of discomfort. In this way, the idea of sharing vulnerability and the construct of psychological safety seem to be closely related. For Edmondson (2018), psychological safety is not about unconditional support or agreement for the sake of agreement. Rather, a psychologically safe environment is one in which productive disagreement and the free exchange of ideas thrive. Along with being treated as a mediator or moderator, several antecedents and outcomes of psychological safety have been proposed, and psychological safety has been measured at multiple levels of analysis (see Edmondson & Lei, 2014 for review). As a result of two qualitative, theory-generating studies, Kahn (1990) proposed that four factors most directly influence psychological safety: interpersonal relationships; group and intergroup dynamics; management style and process; and organizational norms. Meanwhile, Edmondson’s (1999) qualitative and quantitative analysis of the construct at the group-level showed that team psychological safety, defined as “a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking” (p. 354), was associated with team learning behaviour. Although carrying out research at different levels of analysis, Frazier and colleagues (2017) see the works of Kahn and Edmondson as complementary views of the same construct. In their meta-analytic review, consistent with Kahn’s original theorising, they found that at the individual level, positive leader relations, interdependence, and peer support were the strongest indicators of psychological safety. Further, a strong relationship between psychological safety and information sharing and learning behaviour was demonstrated in their analysis, lending credence to Edmondson’s seminal work. In Japan, some research has explored the psychological safety of LGBT+ people in the workplace, as well as its antecedents. Most prominently, Kimura and colleagues (2021) collated the data from three NijiVoice surveys (2018, 2019, and 2020) and compared cis LGBPA+ people, transgender people, and cisgender heterosexual people. It was found that cis-het people reported higher levels of psychological safety than LGBT+ people, and that the psychological safety of trans people was markedly and consistently lower than the other groups over the three year period (see figure 11.1; $n = 7162$).

Figure 11.1 Comparison of psychological safety across three groups for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020



Source: Kimura et al., 2021. Note: Top graph = change in psychological safety for cisgender LGBPA+ people; middle graph = change in psychological safety for transgender people; and bottom graph = change in psychological safety for cisgender heterosexual people. From left to right, graph reads “high-”, “medium-”, and “low-” level of psychological safety.

Related to interdependence, which is defined by Edmondson (1999) as the ability for employees to rely on each other to accomplish their tasks, in the NijiVoice 2020 survey, people who were trans reported higher levels of *koritsukan* (“sense of isolation”) than cis LGB+ people and significantly higher levels than cis heterosexual people (Nijiiro Diversity: CSG, 2020; *n* = 1625). Related to peer support, a negative relationship between psychological safety and instances of discriminatory words or actions, as well as microaggressions, was observed. Meanwhile, a positive relationship was observed between psychological safety and the presence of an ally, defined in the research as a person who has understanding of and supports "sexual minorities". There were no questions that explored respondents' perceptions of leader behaviours or relations.

Given that the magnitude or direction of variable correlations were not measured, and that these studies lack internal and external validity, the generalisability of these findings is limited. However, operating on the premise that, at the individual-level at least, if cis-het people experience higher levels of psychological safety than LGBT+ people in the workplace and are subsequently more likely to take interpersonal risks, it follows that a more equitable distribution of vulnerability in the workplace should involve some discomfort, as well as some learning potential, for cis-het people. In other words, the willingness of people in dominant groups to be vulnerable and to share in the vulnerability already experienced by those in nondominant groups could facilitate psychological safety in the workplace. Edmondson (2018) notes that remaining silent, rather than voicing uncertainty, reporting mistakes, or expressing dissent, comes from a fear of being viewed or labelled negatively, or otherwise a fear of damaging work relationships. Psychological safety represents the antithesis of this fear. Three actions that cis-het people can take, as allies, as researchers, and as practitioners, to get uncomfortable and communicate inclusivity are proposed here:

1. Checking (intersectional) privilege;
2. Degendering people, clothing, and infrastructure; and
3. Prominently displaying symbols of support.

Each will be considered in turn below along with some practical, actionable ways to operationalise epistemic vulnerability.

11.4.1 Checking (intersectional) privilege

The first proposal is relatively straightforward. Privilege (Japanese: *tokken*) as introduced in Chapter 1 (section 1.1.2), refers to the systematic dominance conferred to certain social groups, imbuing them with an unearned advantage (McIntosh, 1988/1992). Many people may have never considered their own privilege, or perhaps only framed it in economic terms, as highlighted in Mizuki's story. Catlin (2021) notes how, when someone's privilege is pointed out, often their first response is to get defensive. She works to locate privilege not in the individual, but rather in the groups that they belong to; in other words, she considers privilege as *systemic privilege*. Catlin also acknowledges that privilege is intersectional, and provides a list of "Fifty potential privileges in the workplace" (p. 15-17), including "You are male", "You are straight", and "You have gotten a job or promotion with the help of a social, family, or school-related connection". This list could be easily modified for the Japanese business context. For example "You are white" could be changed to "You are Japanese"—although, arguably, being white in the Japanese business context also affords considerable privilege. Having a list such as this available in the workplace, perhaps even displayed on a wall, could draw attention to intersectional privilege. Checking privilege is useful for everyone, as Catlin reminds us that people who are members of systematically oppressed groups can still have privilege due to their membership in other groups. In particular, people in positions of power should reflect on the privileges that enabled them to get where they are. Importantly, acknowledging one's privilege should not be a point of shame. Instead, it should be seen as an opportunity to gather resources and to empower others. By recognising systemic inequity through understanding privilege, allies and practitioners can do more than just lift up oppressed individuals in the moment. They can be change agents in long-term transformative processes. Meanwhile, as the author has done in chapter 2 (section 2.1.1), researchers should take the time to reflect upon and acknowledge their privilege, and understand the role it plays in the research process. For example, the privilege of speaking English as a first language allowed the researcher to communicate easily with participants from sixteen different countries including Japan.

Beyond checking intersectional privilege at the individual level, it is also important to check intersectional privilege at the group level. Throughout this text, it has been argued that LGBT+ people are not a part of a homogenous group and that, as individuals, they experience various levels of privilege and oppression depending on the context. Current models of diversity touted by companies in Japan, which tend to show dimensions of diversity as discrete categories, can be problematised when viewed through an intersectional lens. For example, Fujitsu's "Diversity Wheel" introduced in chapter 6 (section 6.2.1) shows two concentric rings that do not intersect, and there are clear boundaries separating each dimension of diversity. At the centre of the two rings, the words "Inclusive Culture" are written. Visually, however, the message of inclusion is lost. These categories do not represent a person; they merely represent abstract concepts. Bowleg (2008) laments the continued declaration of "women and minorities" as if these were two mutually exclusive groups. Moreover, the social category of "gender" usually implies "women" when discussing initiatives; just as "SOGI" usually implies "LGBT+". In other words, only nondominant groups are considered as part of diversity management efforts, and dominant groups, as well as dominant group privilege, are overlooked. McCormack and Kawabata (2020) opine the necessity of "an intellectual practice that does not assume social division" (p. 43) in thinking about the issues of exclusion and inclusion. In 2022, Fujitsu's Diversity Wheel was

Figure 11.2 Fujitsu's "Inclusion Wheel" (2022 revamp)

Source: Fujitsu Group, 2022.

revamped in order to "create an equitable and more inclusive culture where everyone belongs and can be completely themselves" (Fujitsu Group, 2022, n.d.; see figure 11.2). The term "equity" is incorporated into the new wheel "to recognize and respond to the fact that all people are in different circumstances and will require a variety of resources and opportunities depending on their circumstances, as opposed to equality, which provides the same things equally to everyone". Certainly, the new visualisation does inspire a greater sense of interconnectivity. Yet, while acknowledging that "all people are in different circumstances", Fujitsu continues to frame initiatives in terms of fixed social categories. For example, when setting a goal to increase the percentage of female employees in leadership positions, Fujitsu does not explicate what kinds of women this includes. In the context of Japan, are queer women, or foreign women, or younger women, or unmarried women being sponsored, endorsed, and offered these opportunities, or does the promotion of women only extend to the relatively privileged? Meanwhile, the focus area "age" has been changed to "inter-generations", although it is not entirely clear whether the initiatives actually involve cross-generational exchange. On the webpage, in the section listing various initiatives, the following is written: Age-themed networking sessions for employees and their families (Oceania region). The implication here is that the networking sessions are segregated by age group. As evidenced in the current inquiry, in Japan, the gap in mentality between younger and older people is stark. Creating spaces where people of different ages can engage in critical dialogue, form friendships, and develop professional networks, not in a relation of *senpai kōhai*, but in a relation of mutual respect, is of critical importance.

In chapter 10 (section 10.3), an alternate vision of diversity is presented. In this model, along with identifying social categories that are specific to the population, it also articulates possible subject positions the individuals may embody. Further, the categories are seen as overlapping and the subject positions as simultaneous. Utilising an emic approach (Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012), through a company-wide audit, for example, diversity and inclusion management practitioners could similarly ascertain and develop a map of dimensions of difference that are salient to the company. Rather than assembling an arbitrary number of categories while focusing on only a few in practice, companies could instead gain an insight into how privilege operates and work on structural change. As Alcázar et al. (2013) put it: “Before designing a bundle of HR practices for managing diversity, it is necessary to analyse and define clearly the kinds of differences that the organisation needs to manage” (p. 44). The current inquiry explored the intracategorical complexity (McCall, 2005) of the dimension of SOGI diversity, and experiences of privilege and oppression within individuals and within groups were documented. For example, the research revealed that while gay men generally had access to male privilege, company support for those in the LGBT+ expatriate couples cohort, particularly those who were in same- and different-sex relationships, was distinctly lacking. This lack of support directly impacted some of the couples’ ability to stay and work in Japan. If the company has already made an investment in bringing the couple to Japan, paying for flights, accommodation, orientation, training, and so forth, it is in their best interests to provide them with the resources that they need to remain in Japan; chiefly, access to housing, as well as access to legal advice when navigating the visa application process. If not able to assemble an in-house team, which may not be viable or cost-effective, at least HR should be aware of these issues and provide an information package that LGBT+ expatriate couples could receive, via email for instance, ideally before they expatriate. In this package, information regarding different kinds of visa options available to each person expatriating (e.g., the employee, the “trailing spouse”, the dependent, etc.), and a warning about housing discrimination, as well as a list of vetted LGBT-friendly (and foreign-friendly) real estate agents and lawyers, could be included. In particular, knowledge about the designated activities visa and its utility among same-sex married couples should be understood by HR. A step-by-step guide to the visa application process, with approximate time required for each step, and links to necessary documentation, could be provided to the couples. This could be prioritised over prescribing Japanese language classes, for instance, which seemed to be underutilised by the expatriate couples based on this research. This would not only reduce premature turnover, but it would also help the LGBT+ expatriate couple set realistic expectations about their time in Japan. The systems that we have built are based on inequality. Arguably, those with the most privilege should shoulder the most responsibility in questioning, disrupting, and changing these systems.

11.4.2 Degendering people, clothing, and infrastructure

Regarding the second proposal, inclusive language is an important aspect of feeling safe and seen. This research found that trans and gender nonconforming people were misgendered, and people in same- and different-sex relationships were misrecognised because of careless gendered language usage. Linguistically, while Japanese has 3rd person pronouns like "she" and "he", they are rarely used in conversation; the words *kanojo* (denotes "she") and *kare*(*shi*) (denotes "he") are usually reserved for taking about a "girlfriend" or "boyfriend", respectively. Instead, people can be referred to by their name, by a description of their appearance, their hierarchical relation to the speaker, or otherwise the context makes it clear enough who is being talked about and the subject is dropped all together. However, there are instances where gendered language is used when referring to people, as evidenced in the current enquiry (e.g., inquiring about someone's *kanojo* or *okusan* in the workplace; see section 10.3.4). There are also context-dependant familial words such as *onēsan* ("older sister") and *oniisan* ("older brother"). Rin recalled an interaction with a *bentōyasan* (person selling prepared lunch) during the early stages of her transition process: "*a, oniisan omachi*". Here, the shop clerk isn't calling Rin their literal brother. The connotation in this context is more like: "Mister, [thank you for] waiting". Rin was wearing women's clothes and makeup at the time, but evidently did not pass enough to be recognised as a woman. This indicates that, lacking complete information, gendered language is used based on visual cues and expectations to fit people into either the "male" or "female" category. Teshima and colleagues (2021) note how in the workplace, as in school, to designate people as either "male" or "female" by attaching the suffixes "*-kun*" and "*-chan*", respectively, to their names is standard practice—dividing people by *-kun* and *-san* is also common. They advocate for uniform use of "name(*-san*)" when addressing others, at least at first. Rather than using "Mrs/Ms/Miss" or "Mr", the suffix *-san* could even be used when addressing someone directly or talking about someone else in English language communications. There are gender-neutral ways to refer to other peoples' partners and families too, as shown in chapter 6 (section 6.2.2). In the context of Rin's story, the shop clerk could have instead referred to Rin as *okyakusan* (customer); or more formally as *okyakusama*. The point here is to not assume someone's gender based on assumptions, stereotypes, and pre-existing schema. This may take some getting used to and involve conscious unlearning; mistakes will be made. Even ostensibly LGBT-friendly works can contain exclusionary language. For example, Yotsumoto and Senba's (2017) frequent use of *karera*/*kanojora* (i.e., the generic person "he or she") erases the experiences of people who identify as non-binary. Dividing people by gender is deeply entrenched in society, and this is reflected in language choice. A paradigm shift from viewing people through the lens of "social gender" to viewing people as people first needs to occur.

In recent years, in the anglosphere at least, there has been a movement on social networks and dating apps, as well as in business settings, to make including pronouns after one's name convention. For example, in 2021, Instagram integrated a dedicated "pronoun" field into user profiles (Paul, 2021).[13] Users can choose up four pronouns to display from a list that is updated over time based on user submissions. Meanwhile, LinkedIn allows members in certain regions to choose from "*he/him*", "*she/her*", and "*custom*", with many members incorporating "they" (e.g., "she/they") into their set of pronouns (McLaren, 2022). People are also adding their pronouns to email signatures and displaying them during online meetings, and companies like Goldman Sachs have launched an internal campaign to promote awareness about pronouns and how employees self-identify (Campbell, 2019). The author included their pronouns—"he/him"—in the current text, and advocates for the standardisation of pronoun use in academic writing, including in journal publications. By normalising the conversation around gender identity and being vulnerable in this way, allies show solidarity and make space for trans and gender nonconforming people to feel safe and to be vulnerable too. In the case of Japan, as mentioned, 3rd person pronouns are not common-place in communication. However, other ways to create space for trans and gender nonconforming people include removing the *seibetsuran* ("gender field") on forms such as *rirekisho* (curriculum vitae), or otherwise allowing individuals to input their gender identity freely. As the requirements for gender marker change on the *koseki* are so stringent (see section 5.2.2), businesses should anticipate situations where there is a mismatch between official documentation and individual gender identity. This may also hold true for an individual's name. Giving individuals the agency to use the name they want to be called on *meishi* ("business cards"), name tags, and email signatures, as well as in work-related documents, is a part of what is referred to as *gōriteki hairyo* ("reasonable accommodation").[14] Allies and practitioners can take the lead and model this practice when styling their own identifying information, with the inclusion of pronouns in English-language documentation or correspondence. Altogether, degendering written and spoken language at multiple levels of business operation, from hiring to internal communications, could signal to domestic and international job applicants, as well as existing employees, that inclusion of SOGI diversity is taken seriously.

Beyond degendering language, degendering clothing will also communicate inclusivity. Even before entering a company, potential job candidates face binary gender division in *shūkatsu* (job-hunting). In 2020, a change.org petition campaign was launched by SSS (Smash Shukatsu Sexism), which operate on several social media platforms including Instagram and Twitter, deploying the hashtag #ShukatsuSexism.[15] They draw on examples from magazine articles, books, posters, and so forth, to demonstrate how "manners" and "common sense" instructions for job-hunting, such as "men should have short, black hair and be clean-shaven" and "women should wear makeup and skirts", reproduce gender binary theory, create harmful expectations of what is "normal", and quash diverse gender expression. Trans and gender nonconforming people in particular experience difficulties at the interview stage, especially in instances where group interviews that divide "male" and "female" applicants are conducted (Yokoyama, 2020; Abe, 2021; Bateman, 2021). In 2018, a survey that targeted LGBT+ individuals who were new graduate job-seekers in Japan between April 2008 and March 2018 was conducted by ReBit (2019). It was found that 42.5 per cent and 87.4 per cent of LGB+ (n = 146) and trans (n = 95) respondents, respectively, had difficulties stemming from SOGI diversity, or otherwise due to gender dysphoria during *shūkatsu*. For the LGB+ respondents, the top three difficulties were as follows: Questions or remarks from HR or interviewers based on assumption that you are not a "sexual minority"; having trouble communicating things related to sexuality in interviews and "self-promotion" (*jiko PR*); and having to hide sexuality during job screening process. Meanwhile, for the trans respondents, the top three difficulties were more related to binary gender division: Mandatory to include gender on *entorī shīto* and *rirekisho*; gender-segregated suits, bags, and so forth, are difficult to buy; and questions or remarks from HR or interviewers based on assumption that you are not a "sexual minority". Those involved in hiring can create space for vulnerability by communicating to job applicants that they can wear clothing that allows them to express their gender in a way that feels comfortable for them, and if conducting group interviews, consider dividing applicants randomly. Ideally, this kind of gender inclusive protocol should be formalised in HR manuals.

The 2019 survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020) found that, among the companies that had uniforms or dress codes (n = 1591), 57.8 per cent indicated that they had implemented different rules or uniforms based on the gender binary. Businesses should consider reforming dress code and uniform policies, including grooming and makeup that result in double standards for, or otherwise differentiate "male" and "female" employees. The health and safety of the people in the workplace, and of clients and customers, not socially constructed gender difference, should inform dress code policy. From the interview, it seems that Mizuki's workplace struck a healthy balance between professionalism and individual expression, an environment she felt was “very rare in Japan” (see section 11.1.3). Mizuki was able to express herself while taking responsibility for her decisions regarding her appearance, and how that might affect others around her. Not having to think twice about what you wear when going to a job interview or when going into work is a privilege. In a society where looks matter, and where people are so quick to judge based on first impressions, giving employees agency in their gender expression could open new modes of communication and consensus building, not based on conformity or fear of being the “odd one out”, but instead on mutual respect. The third tenet of Gilson’s (2011) epistemic vulnerability—putting oneself in and learning from situations in which one is the Other (accepting the genuine value of discomfort)—in particular is relevant here. In the workplace, cis-het people, especially men, could benefit from some gender play. The worlds of the Takarazuka Revue and Kabuki, which reveal the highly performative nature of gender, are reflected in the workplace; there are “male character” costumes, and “female character” costumes. This does not imply that the experience of navigating gender expression as a trans or gender nonconforming person, or indeed as any person, should be taken lightly. In certain contexts, wearing the “wrong” clothing can invoke harassment and physical and psychic harm; gender violations have very real consequences. Rather, the understanding that gender is performative offers the possibility of its undoing as a form of resistance through vulnerability.

Citing Butler’s *Precarious life* (2004b), Tyler (2020) writes: “responding non-violently to the other’s vulnerability is not simply a question of treating the other as we might wish to be treated ourselves, but rather of *recognizing our mutual vulnerability* within a shared scene of recognition in the hope that we might be able to reconstitute that scene in order to distribute the possibility of liveability more ethically” (p. 192, emphasis added). This non-violent ethics, as Rumens (2018) posits, is not premised so much on recognising the sameness in the Other, but rather on recognising common vulnerability that everyone faces, given that “we are outside ourselves, constituted in cultural norms that precede and exceed us … that condition us fundamentally” (Butler, 2004b, p. 45). In this way, true learning and understanding comes from transcending Self and Other, something that many queer people, and especially trans people, already practice in their daily lives: questioning normative reality and giving themselves over to uncertainty; deconstructing and reconstructing gender through meticulous study; and challenging the meaning of success and writing their own scripts. As a supervisor, a diversity officer, or a board member, taking the time to sit down with queer folks, asking them questions about their life experience, and maybe trying on some makeup, or a chest binder, or a wig, or a heel, could be incredibly uncomfortable, but also incredibly insightful. In his *AFS tomo no kai* presentation (see chapter 6, section 6.3.2), Sugiyama Fumino advocated for face to face discussion and for "changing minds one mind at a time". Ideally, a one-on-one meeting could take place in a space and at a time that is negotiated and consented to by all parties in advance; it could even take place virtually. Both parties should be encouraged to ask questions. It could be facilitated by an internal expert or external consultant, who could screen the questions, as well as formulate some questions, ahead of time. Diversity and inclusion consultant Jennifer Brown recommends that senior leaders identify their "diversity story—about a time when you faced the sting of exclusion. Be vulnerable. Share it to model the value you place on inclusive workplace practices" (cited in Catlin, 2021, p. 216). Likewise, as a researcher it is important to get uncomfortable, to be proven wrong, and to be the Other. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 12 (section 12.2.2). Although this recommendation may be the easiest to implement in terms of overall resources, it is surely the most ambitious, and may come across as overly idealistic. Perhaps, more than structured, interventional-type strategies for sharing vulnerability, what is really needed in organisations are intersectional friendships and coalitions, "queer bonds" that, as evidenced in Rumen's (2018) study of gay-straight male friendships, form organically. During her interview, Midori stressed the importance of managers connecting with *genba* ("what's happening on the ground"): "… continuously talking to people, having dialogue, and feeling their pain, feeling their happiness … get your own insight". The current research revealed there are already queer people in the workplace who are willing to tell their stories. It is time now for others to be willing to listen; with care, with curiosity, and with compassion.

Finally, degendering infrastructure involves (re)designing spaces, namely toilets and change rooms, which typically discriminate between men and women. People who are transitioning may want to move from using the "male" toilet to using the "female" toilet, or vice versa. Otherwise, people who are trans or gender nonconforming may not feel comfortable using either "female" or "male" toilets. Similarly, gender segregated change rooms may be an unsafe space for people with bodies that are not perceived as being "male enough" or "female enough". Of the Sustainable Development Goals, goal 6 relates to toilets: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" (United Nations, 2022, p. 7). "Toilet" is explicitly mentioned in the Japanese language version of this goal, and the difficultly of using *danjobetsu* ("separated male and female") public toilets has been recognised (e.g., City of Kyoto, 2020; Nijiiro Diversity, 2021). This difficultly extends to the workplace. In 2017, a survey was conducted by the "Research Group on Office Restrooms for All-Gender"; a cooperative between Kanazawa

University, COMANY Inc., and LIXIL Corporation. Analysing the data collected from the trans respondents (*n* = 299), a discrepancy of 38.8 per cent was found between "desired toilet use" and "actual toilet use" (Research Group on Office Restrooms for All-Gender, 2019). In other words, in the workplace, more than 1 in 3 trans people were using a toilet they did not want to. Also recorded were cases where the trans person would leave the office to use a toilet, or otherwise forgo use altogether ("*gaman suru*"). Regarding toilet conditions, level of satisfaction was measured across 12 items, including "cleanliness", "barrier free (i.e., no stairs, handrails available, etc.)", and "security": scale from +5 ("satisfied") to -5 ("dissatisfied"). "Number of toilet options" received the lowest score (-0.82) among trans respondents, and the second lowest score (0.52) among cisgender respondents (*n* = 824). Further, 24.3 per cent of trans respondents (*n* = 115) indicated that they used the *takinō toire* (multipurpose toilets) in their office building on a daily basis. Among the reasons for using the multipurpose toilets "calmness (*ochitsuku*)" and "can be used regardless of gender" were most often selected by the trans respondents. Finally, almost 80 per cent of trans respondents (*n* = 299) indicated that if a *danjo kyōyō no koshitsu toire* ("singleroom unisex toilet") was available at the office they would use it on a daily basis (31.4%), or otherwise use it depending on the conditions and circumstances (46.5%); MtX respondents were particularly open to the possibility. Based on this survey, it can be said that there is a demand, not only from trans people, for more toilet options.[16] Article 628 of the Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health (1972) and article 17 of the Ordinance on Health Standards in the Office (1972) stipulate that toilets must be separated for men and women. Therefore, it is currently not possible to install unisex toilets in the workplace. However, singleroom unisex toilets, sometimes referred to as *daredemo toire* ("all gender toilets") are becoming more widespread, and provide an alternative option to multipurpose toilets, which are large spaces with accessibility features for people living with disability, people living with an ostomy, changing babies' diapers, and so forth.

Of course, redesigning toilets spaces may not be feasible for businesses that are renting an office space, or otherwise if the cost is prohibitive, as dicussed in chapter 6 (section 6.3.3.). Even when a company owns the building there may be limitations. For example, in an interview, Koyama Daisaku, the external relations PR manager at LUSH Japan, talked about their "trial and error" toilet reform in 2015 (Yotsumoto & Senba, 2017). At the time, their Shinagawa office and main office were not in new buildings and they only had male and female toilets. LUSH Japan was able to remove the colour designation from the toilets—red for women, and blue or black for men—in order to reduce potential feelings of gender dysphoria. However, because people from

Figure 11.3 Various symbols indicating toilet facilities

Source: Research Group on Office Restrooms for All-Gender, 2019. From left to right: *danjo hanhan no sain* ("all-gender toilet"); *reinbō māku* ("LGBT-friendly toilet"); *danjo kyōyō toire no sain* ("unisex toilet").

outside the company also used the toilets, so as not to cause confusion, the "female use" mark (i.e., person wearing a shirt) and "male use" mark had to remain. In contrast, opened in 2017, the MEGA Don Quijote Shibuya Main Store was built with inclusive toilet design in mind. The second floor toilet area, used by both customers and staff, includes three singleroom unisex toilets, which are flanked on either side by a male use toilet and a female use toilet. The singleroom toilets are distinguished by a *danjo hanhan no sain* ("half male, half female sign"; see figure 11.3) with the words "all gender" inscribed beneath. On several occasions, the author has also seen the "rainbow mark" (i.e., pride flag) used to designate "LGBT-friendly" toilets (usually appended to existing multipurpose toilets). According to the above survey, the majority (47.2%) of trans respondents (n = 299) indicated that there was no need to change the shape or colour of the regularly used sign for unisex restrooms (Research Group on Office Restrooms for All-Gender, 2019). In fact, there were respondents who said that a "special mark would encourage discrimination", and in followup interviews participants expressed "strong discomfort" with regards to the *danjo hanhan no sain*. Indeed, the symbol could invoke the idea that someone who is trans is hermaphroditic. Similarly, in 2018, it was reported that Osaka City removed the "rainbow mark" from about 240 multipurpose toilets after receiving feedback from the LGBT community ("LGBT hairyo no reinbō māku", 2018). As for changing clothes while at work, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020) company survey found that 80.3 per cent of companies (n = 2388) had change rooms for employees to use. Meanwhile, same survey found that only 1.2 per cent of companies had improved the changing room environment with consideration for trans people (n = 242). Teshima et al. (2021) describes cases where privacy curtains were installed in group change rooms, or otherwise "fitting boards" (i.e., small standing platforms that can be folded out of the way) were installed in toilet cubicles, when it was not possible for the business to provide private change rooms. Based on feedback, they also suggest that businesses create a map showing where facilities, such as change rooms and toilets, are located in the workplace. This could be distributed to new employees during orientation sessions, giving trans and gender nonconforming people a clear sense of what is available to them before they commence the job. Having access to toilets and change rooms that are comfortable and safe to use is a privilege. An internal survey similar to the one devised by the Research Group on Office Restrooms for All-Gender could help the business assess the needs of their employees regarding toilet use and change room use, and then act in accordance with the ideals of reasonable accommodation (i.e., not a one-sided request on the part of the individual or a one-sided concession on the part of the company, but a mutual agreement through joint work). Ultimately, people who are LGBT+ want to maintain their dignity, privacy, and autonomy when using toilets and change rooms, and not be singled-out or shown special treatment, however well intended.

11.4.3 Prominently displaying symbols of support

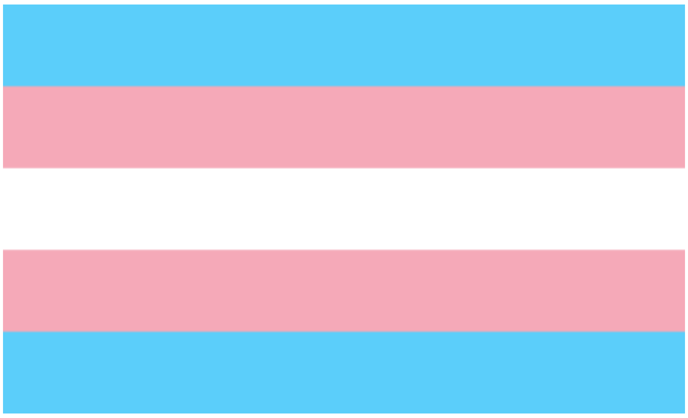
Regarding the final proposal, as allies or managers, even more overt than displaying one's pronouns, displaying symbols of support that are readily identified by members of the LGBT+ community could help to improve their psychological safety in the workplace. The most obvious and recognisable symbol is the pride flag. Designed in San Francisco in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, the pride flag, also known as the LGBT flag or the rainbow flag, is made up of six horizontal bands of colour—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple—and has become a transnational symbol of the LGBT pride movement (Rossi, 2020). It can be seen waving in pride festivals across the globe, and has also been incorporated into governmental and corporate imagery; Japan is no exception. In the context of the Japanese workplace, the pride flag seems to have experienced limited utility thus far, relegated to a stray sticker on a computer monitor or tucked away in the pages of a corporate website, or otherwise restricted to the "pride season" (late April or early May in the case of Tokyo pride events). In other words, support is for the most part more abstract and associated with a company or a brand, rather than with a particular individual. In contrast, a symbol that has seen wide dissemination in recent years is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) "colour wheel" (see figure 11.4). The wheel consists of 17 different coloured wedges representing the 17 goals, and the author has seen it featured on trains and in playgrounds, on construction site notice boards and on delivery trucks. Most significantly, more and more businesspeople can be spotted sporting a colour wheel pin on their lapel during their commutes to and from work, or between meetings. In a *New York Times* article titled "Why is this colorful little wheel suddenly everywhere in Japan?" (Dooley & Ueno, 2022), the surge in interest in the

Figure 11.4 SDGs "colour wheel"

Source: UN Department of Global Communications, 2022.

SDGs in Japan is examined. The authors write: "Japan has coalesced around the goals as a feel-good, and in theory do-good, endeavor". However, in what has been referred to as "SDGs washing" (cf. greenwashing), there are concerns that "companies and government agencies are publicly supporting the goals as a way to burnish their image", and that businesspeople are donning the colour wheel pin out of obligation rather than out of actual commitment. Other commentators are hopeful that "the pin will move from a fad to a symbol of real change". If nothing else, wearing and displaying symbols associated with the SDGs generates buzz. Since 2018, Dentsu has been conducting a nation-wide survey asking respondents about their knowledge of and interest in the SDGs. It can be seen that the SDGs awareness rate climbed from 14.8 per cent in 2018 to 86 per cent in 2022 (Dentsu Inc., 2022). Specifically, in the 5th wave of the survey (*n* = 1400 weighted sample), the data reveals that 51.8 per cent of the participants had heard the term "SDGs" but were unclear on the details, while 32.4 per cent understood what the SDGs entailed. Further, 36.9 per cent of respondents were highly motivated to put SDGs into practice. Among those who were, "Generation Z"[17] had a pronounced interest in speaking up and taking action against sexism and gender inequality, consuming vegan and plant-based products, and participating in community-based events, including volunteering, that related to the SDGs. In chapter 5 (section 5.2.1) it was indicated that 91 per cent of respondents had heard the term "LGBT", and 57.1 per cent had understanding of it. However, it may be difficult for the people to get behind supporting the "LGBT community" if they see themselves as fundamentally separate from it. Meanwhile, with the promise of "leave no one behind", the SDGs represent goals that

Figure 11.5 Transgender pride flag



Source: Wikimedia Commons, 2006.

everyone can feel a part of. Yet, as seen in chapter 6 (section 6.2.3), corporations and government agencies are already aligning SDGs with outcomes related to SOGI diversity. If individuals can acknowledge that tackling all forms of inequality and discrimination is a shared goal of the SDGs and the LGBT movement, they may be able to extend their enthusiasm toward showing up for queer people.

The author has seen LGBT *tōjisha* and activists wearing pride flag badges and other rainbow paraphernalia, including t-shirts and ties. However, this is more so tied to their official role as an LGBT consultant, for instance, or otherwise to a specific event. In the same way that the SDGs colour wheel is being proudly brandished around as a signifier of social advancement, allies and practitioners could get vulnerable and get behind wearing the pride flag as a part of daily workplace practice. The author asserts that if people were able to start wearing SDGs pins, even though at first they might have stood out as doing something that others around them weren't doing, then it follows that they could do the same for a pride flag pin, which would be no more conspicuous. In addition to the pride flag, displaying the trans flag[18] (see figure 11.5) could be of particular benefit to the psychological safety of trans and gender nonconforming people, communicating an understanding that the issues that people who are trans face are unique. These pins could be sourced from a wholesaler and distributed to staff, to executive management, and to board members, as the case may be, as a part of wider LGBT promotion and education efforts. Other ways individuals could display the pride flag and/or trans flag could include incorporating them into their *meishi*, or otherwise adding them to their profile or name on their social media or business networking accounts in the form of an emoji; researchers specifically could do the same for accounts associated with academic networking sites such as Research Gate. As Yotsumoto and Senba (2017) put it: “For those who don’t know, it’s just a beautifully coloured design, but for those who know it, it’s a metaphorical symbol that says, ‘I understand and sympathise with sexual minorities’” (p. 122). For those who don’t know, wearing a pride flag pin on one’s clothing, or displaying it on one’s *meishi* could be the beginning of a vulnerable and valuable conversation. Emphasised throughout this text was the fact that a culture of silence around SOGI diversity pervades, not only workplaces, but also homes, schools, and other community spaces. For cis-het people who decide to display prominently symbols of support, concerns such as, “my sexuality (or gender identity) may be questioned” or “can I speak on behalf of a group that I am not a part of” may surface. In her book, *Dare to Lead*, Brené Brown writes: “People are opting out of vital conversations about diversity and inclusivity because they fear looking wrong, saying something wrong, or being wrong. *Choosing our own comfort over hard conversations is the epitome of privilege*, and it corrodes trust and moves us away from meaningful and lasting change” (2018, p. 9; emphasis added). Part of epistemic learning is an openness to being wrong. People in positions of privilege have the resources, social, financial, and so forth, at their disposal to choose discomfort. Given the chance, out of this discomfort may come profound growth.

Crucially, the pride flag should not be used uncritically, lest actors run the risk of its depoliticisation. Beyond its mobilisation as an empowering symbol against cisnormativity and heteronormativity, the global circulation of the pride flag is driven by capitalised processes of “global queering” (see Altman, 1996). As such, the pride flag is a cultural commodity that can be purchased on the market as a signifier of inclusion (Klapeer and Laskar, 2018). Meanwhile, Tyler and Vachhani (2021) note that the rainbow, as adopted by the queer community, is an easily recognisable sign of solidarity that transcends cultural or linguistic differences. At the same time, the rainbow’s affective capacity is also its vulnerability: “the rainbow aesthetic, with its bright colours and cheerful connotations renders it particularly vulnerable to co-optation and incorporation into corporate branding initiatives” (p. 254). In Japan, this can be seen in the *reinbō guzzu* (rainbow goods) trend, with companies using the rainbow in advertising and merchandising efforts that target the “LGBT market”, especially at times to coincide with pride events. For example, in 2021, convenience store Family Mart debuted their “convenience wear” line, which includes shirts, underwear, and towels. On the 19th of April 2022, a few days before Tokyo Rainbow Pride, they released a limited run of rainbow “line socks” country-wide (Family Mart, 2022). Additionally, for the second year straight, they incorporated the rainbow flag into the

Figure 11.6 Family Mart "rainbow goods"

Source: Family Mart, 2022. Left: "Rainbow" line socks product. Right: Fried chicken product in rainbow packaging.

famichiki ("family chicken", a fried chicken product) packaging (see figure 11.6). In relation to businesses, *pinkwashing*[19], also called rainbow-washing (see, for example, Bruxelle, 2018), may refer to a form of marketing that profits off of the Pride movement while failing to show true commitment to LGBT+ communities or otherwise ignoring the political elements of the movement (Pycha, 2020). Tyler and Vachhani (2021) argue that even if ostensibly undertaken with the aim of raising awareness for LGBT+ rights or raising funds for LGBT+ charities, it is important that corporations are subject to critique for the kind of pinkwashing involved when they incorporate symbols such as the rainbow into their product range. In their case study of Primark, an Irish multinational fast fashion retailer, Tyler and Vachhani demonstrated how rhetorical commitments to inclusion were undermined by practices of "over-inclusion", namely through the introduction a "pride-themed" range of merchandise, in concert with practices of exclusion, as evidenced by the extensive misrecognition of a trans employee. As such, some *tōjisha* may be disgruntled by the flagrant and profit-oriented use of the Pride flag. In the case of Family Mart, there was no indication that any of the money generated from sales of the socks or chicken would go toward funding LGBT-related organisations. Moreover, there was not any indication on the packaging or in the stores that these products were even affiliated with Pride or with the LGBT movement. In other words, the actions taken by Family Mart can come across as disingenuous and as a quick cash-grab. Attempts by Local government to use the pride flag may also be misguided. For example, as mentioned in section 11.4.2, without necessarily consulting LGBT *tōjisha*, the *reinbō māku* has been used to designate "LGBT-friendly" toilet facilities.

The recent debate over adding brown and black stripes to the pride flag to make visible queers of colour and to tackle racism and the lack of intersectionality in queer communities highlights the flag's complex and contested history (Klapeer and Laskar, 2018). More inclusive pride flag designs, including those that incorporate the trans flag, have been met with criticism. In a similar fashion to complaints that the LGBT acronym is becoming an "alphabet soup" as it continues to incorporate new letters (e.g., LGBTQIA+), pride flag redesigns have been criticised by members of the community, much of the time by those who are in positions of relative privilege, for adding too much complexity. On the other hand, there is a concern that the generic pride flag is becoming too mainstream. The problem with mainstreaming queerness is that it loses its potential as a site of resistance; queer is subversive, queer is disruptive. Mainstreaming can result in the co-opting and de-radicalisation of queer culture, and the commodification of queer subjectivities. Further, normalisation can lead to the exclusion and further marginalisation of certain groups, as policy-makers and corporations decide the limits of "acceptable" diversity. As Rumens (2018, p. 177) writes: "Queer … steers us away from the ethic of tolerance (putting up with the Other) as well as of generosity (giving oneself to the Other), ever mindful of the risks of appropriation, exploitation and normalization … associated with both strategies, towards an ethic of openness to the Other (being given over to the Other)". In other words, it is important that symbols, including the pride flag, remain open to contestation and reinterpretation; to being queered. With that being said, a detailed guideline for the use of the SDG logo, including the colour wheel and the 17 icons is freely available on the Internet (United Nations Department of Global Communications, 2020). It stipulates the scope of acceptable use, and outlines approved format, size, and colouring specifications. For example, the colour wheel should not be distorted or rearranged, and the colours should not be altered. In the spirit of enabling "information sharing, engagement, and collaboration", a similar guideline could be created to confer appropriate use of the pride flag and other flag designs, as well as other symbols associated with the LGBT+ community; not as a means to shut down ideas or dialogue about how these symbols could be used or modified, but rather as a means to gently guide a usage that is rooted in respect. In this way an ethical stewardship could be cultivated. Finally, wearing a pride flag and showing solidarity with the queer community should not be seen as "taking away" from other "diversity groups". Viewing social categories through an intersectional lens, and recognising intracategorical complexity, coalitions can be forged across diverse groups of people, as was seen in the 2018 protests and celebrations (see chapter 5, section 5.2.3). Coalitions, not divisions, are what are needed for change.

Here, it has been argued that the psychological safety of LGBT+ people, and thus their willingness to speak up and contribute to organisational knowledge, can be nurtured by the vulnerability of allies, practitioners, and researchers. Specifically, shared vulnerability—a more equitable distribution of vulnerability across the workplace—was seen as a potential antecedent to psychological safety, and several actions that individuals and businesses could take to learn through the process of vulnerability—i.e., epistemic vulnerability (Gilson, 2011)—were proffered. In this way, vulnerability was framed not as an oppressive force, but rather as a positive, transformational force. Edmondson (2018) argues that in jobs where learning or collaboration is required for success, fear—of management or of the consequences of underperforming, for instance—is not an effective motivator. Environments where people can ask for help and can admit making a mistake without fear of embarrassment or punishment are environments where creativity and learning can thrive. Likewise, when people feel safe to bring their full selves to work, they bring with them valuable, intersectional life experience. As discussed, positive leader relations are an important antecedents of psychological safety (Frazier et al., 2017). Recognising that direct supervisors and/or human resources managers may be among the first people an LGBT+ person consults in the workplace when seeking support, as was the case for Rin (see section 11.1.1), it is crucial that these leaders create a space in which everyone feels safe. Along with proactively making themselves available for one-on-one meetings, managers can facilitate shared vulnerability through checking their privilege, using gender-neutral language, and wearing symbols of support. Regarding measurement, several scales have been developed for individual- (e.g., Brown & Leigh, 1996; May et al., 2004) and group-level (e.g., Edmondson, 1999), assessment of psychological safety. For example, in the NijiVoice surveys individual psychological safety was measured using a single item: “Would you say that your workplace has an atmosphere where you can feel safe and comfortable expressing your thoughts and feelings?” (Nijiiro Diversity: CSG, 2020b). Respondents could answer using a 5-point Likert scale from “I think so” to “I don’t think so”. The data was then aggregated and presented as a percentage spread of respondents indicating feeling “high-”, “medium-”, and “low-” levels of psychological safety. Meanwhile, Edmondson (with Lei, 2014; 2018) asserts that psychological safety can best be understood as a group level phenomenon, emphasising that people working together tend to share similar perceptions of whether or not the climate is psychologically safe. Edmondson’s (1999) original scale consists of seven items measuring team psychological safety including, “If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you” (reverse scored); and, “Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilised”. Respondents answer using a 7-

point Likert scale from “very inaccurate” to “very accurate”. This multi-item measure, which includes reverse coded items, is much more robust than the single-item measure in the Nijiiro Diversity surveys. This is not to say that the Nijiiro Diversity surveys are without merit. Arguably, although a single item may not adequately capture the construct of psychological safety, over a multi-year period it has been consistently shown that LGBT+ people, and particularly trans people, report lower levels of “psychological safety” than their cis-het counterparts.

Another consideration when measuring psychological safety is context. It can be understood that culture may impact the role of psychological safety (Frazier et al., 2017). Recognising that the construct of psychological safety was originally defined in a western cultural context, in their study of Japanese workers (*n* = 320), Ochiai and Otsuka (2021) adapt a psychological safety scale that was developed in the cultural context of China (see Liang et al., 2012). They investigated the reliability and validity of the Japanese version of the scale found it to be adequate for use in measuring psychological safety in the context of Japan. The scale consists of five items including, “At my workplace, speaking your mind (*honne*) is encouraged”, and “At my place of work, even if I have a different opinion than others, I will not be criticised”, and respondents answer each item using the following prompt: The following items ask about how things have been at your place of work over the past few weeks. For each question, please assign a score, where 1 is “does not apply at all” and 5 is “strongly applicable”. Here, rather than asking participants to respond to an ambiguous, general statement about the workplace as in the Nijiiro Diversity survey, a discernable time frame—“over the past few weeks”—is supplied, helping participants contextualise their answers and maybe reflect on a specific experience. Also, the term *honne* (lit. true sound) would be readily understood by someone who has been socialised in a Japanese cultural context. Finally, and significantly, the participants completed the survey once to ascertain a baseline score, and then completed the survey again a month later. Taken together, the level of analysis, number of items and wording, cultural context, and measurement timeline are all important considerations when conducting a survey related to psychological safety. Along with measuring psychological safety, measuring its antecedents and outcomes would also be of benefit. This could include the measurement and operationalisation of shared (epistemic) vulnerability as a potential antecedent variable.

As the concept of *arai* (ally) seems to be gaining momentum in Japan, another hypothetical antecedent could be allyship. As discussed in chapter 6 (section 6.3.3), companies in Japan like KDDI have been distributing “ally stickers” and establishing networks of allies. The author posits the following questions: Based on the expectations of people who are LGBT+, what does it mean to be an "active ally" (Catlin, 2022; see also chapter 3 section 3.3.3) in the context of Japan; and, can the effectiveness of such allyship programmes in relation to the psychological safety of LGBT+ employees be empirically measured? As for the latter, as discussed with regards to the NijiVoice survey data, creating an instrument that delineates causation from correlation is a methodological issue. In order to understand psychological safety systematically, Edmondson and Lei (2014) recommend multilevel and cross-level research that gathers a mix of qualitative data through field observations and quantitative data through controlled laboratory experiments. In light of the current inquiry, understanding psychological safety intersectionally should also be pursued. Beyond SOGI diversity, comparing individual results across other dimensions of difference (e.g., age, gender, nationality, marital status) could be informative. For example, in a given workplace or work team, it could be found that the psychological safety of those who identity as "women" could be lower than that of those who identify as "men", regardless of sexuality. Overall, investigating the antecedents and outcomes of psychological safety in the workplace in Japan, including for people who are LGBT+, could prove to be a lucrative line of research in management and organisational studies. In closing: For many people, vulnerability is not a choice; it is a daily reality. While everyone is vulnerable, in a hierarchically organised society, some people are more vulnerable than others (Butler, 2004b). Recognising this, especially as someone in a position of privilege, and choosing vulnerability, choosing to face humanity's shared vulnerability: that is the space where change happens, for that is the space where humans meet humans.

Notes

1. By category, 53.6% of trans men, 46.3% of trans women, 34.9% of lesbians, and 25.5% of gay men had experienced being outed ("Autingu, 25% ga keiken", 2020).
2. For instance, a more recent phenomenon in Japan, there is a specific "uniform" for job-hunting called the *rikurūto sūtsu* (recruit suit) that is gendered: a suit worn with a white shirt and a dark tie for men, and a suit with a skirt, white blouse, and a jacket that's cinched in at the waist for women (Nakagawa, 2019; Bateman, 2021).
3. For more information, see https://jobrainbow.jp/corp/company
4. This "starting from scratch" in a new country could be comparable to moving away from family and community in regional areas to urban centres like Tokyo, something that was brought up by participants in the J cohort. However, like those in the E cohort, the J cohort participants that had studied or worked abroad, such as Haru, Shogo, and Yuki, reported similar experiences of "finding themselves" while living away from Japan.
5. "International students" are defined as belonging to one of the seven following institutions (percentage of total international student population as of May 1st, 2020 in brackets) (JASSO, 2021): *daigakuin* (graduate schools) 19%; *daigaku* (*gakubu*) (universities undergraduate) 28.5%; *tanki daigaku* (junior colleges) 1%; *koto senmongakkō* (colleges of technology) 0.1%; *senshugakkō* (*senmon katei*) (professional training colleges) 28.4%;

junbi kyoiku katei (university preparatory courses) 1%; *nihongo kyōiku kikan* (Japanese language institutes; 22%).

6. This average was calculated by dividing the yearly working hour total (2000) by 365 and then multiplying it by 7.
7. The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is The Japan Foundation and Japanese Educational Exchanges and Services on behalf of Japan's education ministry. The test has five levels of proficiency, from N5 to N1. Those who pass the N1 test are defined as having "the ability to understand Japanese in a variety of circumstances" (https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html).
8. Data collection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, from March 2021 to May 2021. The job listings were organised as follows (Japan Switch, 2021): No Japanese, 435 jobs (5%); N4-N5, 181 jobs (2%); N3, 641 jobs (8%); N2, 2427 jobs (30%); N1, 1679 jobs (21%); Unspecified (i.e., did not list level of Japanese required), 2633 jobs (34%).
9. A breakdown of mean scores in Japan across the four language skills is as follows: "Reading" = 19; "Listening" = 19; "Speaking" = 17; "Writing" = 18 (ETS, 2020). Arguably, using test data to rank countries based on their English proficiency is inappropriate, as cautioned in the report: "ETS, creator of the TOEFL test, does not endorse the practice of ranking countries on the basis of TOEFL scores, as this is a misuse of data. The TOEFL test provides accurate scores at the individual level; it is not appropriate for comparing countries. The differences in the number of students taking the test in each country, how early English is introduced into the curriculum, how many hours per week are devoted to learning English, and the fact that those taking the test are not representative of all English speakers in each country or any defined population make ranking by test score meaningless" (p. 19).
10. The city of Tokyo fared slightly better than the national average, ranking 65th ("moderate proficiency") out of 134 cities.
11. Upon receiving his DA visa, a *shiteisho* (designation) was appended to Lionel's passport. It explicated that Sebastian cohabitated (*dōkyo*) with and was the supporter (*fuyō wo ukeru mono*) of Lionel. Technically, their marriage in Argentina was not recognised in Japan.
12. Staffed by LGBT+ individuals and allies, IRIS became incorporated in 2016 (see https://iris-lgbt.com/company/).
13. At the time of writing, the feature is only available to users based in the US, UK, Canada and Australia.
14. In Japan, *gōritekihairyo* is most readily associated with disability discourse and is defined in the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, which Japan signed in 2007 and ratified in 2014. In the book, *Sentakusei gan rikan shainyō shūgyō kisoku hyōjun fōmatto* (Ed. Endo, 2019), a broader definition is proffered: "[Reasonable accommodation] is achieved not through the person's unilateral request for consideration, nor through the company imposing a one-sided consideration without listening to the person's wishes, but rather through joint work 'dialogue' between the person and the company" (cited in Teshima et al., 2021, p. 100).
15. For more details, see https://www.change.org/p/please-stop-sexism-in-job-hunting-industry-and-respect-diversity.
16. There is also some resistance. Answering the question "What do you think about trans people using the toilet that corresponds with their gender identity", in workplaces where no study sessions or training on "sexual minorities" were implemented, 8.7 per cent of respondents indicated that they were "very resistant" and 30.1 per cent indicated that they were "rather resistant"; 26.8 and 34.4 per cent were "not resistant" and "rather not resistant", respectively. In contrast, in workplaces where study sessions or training was implemented, 6.1 per cent of respondents were very resistant, and 38.6 per cent were

not resistant. Reasons for resistance indicated included: “don’t know why”; “I can’t understand because I don’t know about transgender”; and “I don’t understand because I’m not familiar [with trans people]”.

17. As defined in the survey, Generation Z refers to the cohort of individuals born from the mid-1990s to early 2000s. In the context of the survey analysis, respondents between ages 15 and 24 were considered Generation Z.
18. The trans flag was designed by Monica Helms, a trans woman from the United States, in 1999 (Smithsonian, 2022). It consists of five horizontal stripes in the following sequence: light-blue, pink, white, pink, light-blue.
19. The term *pinkwashing* was first coined by the group Breast Cancer Action in response to growing concerns about pink ribbon commercialisation (Breast Cancer Consortium, 2017). Later, it was used in the context of queer activism in Israel, with the “pink” in reference to the pink triangle, which was used by the Nazis to designate “homosexual men”. In an op-ed article for the New York Times, Sarah Schluman (2011) describes pinkwashing as “a deliberate strategy to conceal the continuing violations of Palestinians’ human rights behind an image of modernity signified by Israeli gay life” (see also discussion of “homonationalism” in Puar, 2007).

Chapter 12 - Conclusion

12.1 Summary of empirical inquiry

In Japan, the *randoseru* (backpack) is synonymous with elementary schoolchildren. During the interview, Kasumi told a story about her childhood. Before commencing elementary school, her mother asked her what colour backpack she wanted: blue or red. Kasumi chose a blue backpack, even though she knew, at seven years of age, that it was "going to [mean] trouble" in her school life. Traditionally, red was for girls, and black—or blue, as in Kasumi's story—was for boys.

> Interviewer: So, is there still only the red and blue bags or?
>
> Kasumi: Ah, there is a light blue or, purple or...
>
> Interviewer: More colours.
>
> Kasumi: More colours but; and then, bit differentiated. Girls choose purple, sometimes girls choose light blue; Japan is changing. And then, I hope no one cares who chooses which colours.

Kasumi recognised that, compared with her time at school, there were a greater variety of colours to choose from; however, the colours remained gendered. Hoping for a time when children can choose whichever coloured backpack they like without others caring seems like a fitting analogy for this inquiry, and the expression *jūnintoiro* ("different strokes for different folks"; lit. ten people, ten colours) comes to mind. Japan is changing. Indeed, "change" was a salient coding category that came out of the data analysis of Study 1. Participants reflected on the change they had witnessed in their own lifetimes vis-à-vis their LGBT+ identities: change in societal attitudes; change in representation and visibility of the LGBT+ community; change in language; and change in legislation. This research offers an opportunity to celebrate and embrace change, rather than fear it; a message equally applicable to the research process itself. In this section, the outcomes of Study 1 and Study 2, as well as the main findings from the intersectionality analysis, are summarised.

12.1.1 Study 1

Originally, this research was going to focus on describing the differences between the workplace experiences of "L", "G", "B", and "T" subjectivities. How "foreigner" identity intersected with LGBT+ identity, in contrast to the intersections of "Japanese" and LGBT+ identities, proved to be much more compelling. The constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006) that informed the qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to remain curious and open. Rather than being constrained by *a priori* hypotheses, the researcher could follow the data in new and unexpected directions. For example, despite utilising the same interview protocol, analysis of the transcript data in Study 1 uncovered salient differences between the LGBT+ expatriate individuals cohort (E cohort) and the Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort (J cohort), resulting in two disparate theories.

In chapter 7, after determining the core categories from the J cohort data—“marriage”, “don’t talk about it”, and “representation”—a conceptual framework of the antecedents and outcomes of *workplace climates of exclusion* was developed. The interaction between society, workplace climate, and individual employee behaviour was displayed linearly. This was expounded upon in chapter 8. Firstly, because (heterosexual) marriage and family were seen as a matter of course, a system of appraisal and value-judgement based on the employee’s marital status had taken root in many companies. Along with impeding career advancement, for the Japanese LGBT+ employee, this led to psychological strain during social interactions. This was especially pronounced in informal workplace settings such as *nomikai*. Consequently, identity management practices, including avoidance and counterfeiting (Wood, 1994), were implemented. This was theorised to limit access to social capital (Lin 2001). Secondly, despite an increased awareness of LGBT+ issues in Japan, a culture of silence, typified by a “don’t ask, don’t tell” mindset, continued to pervade families, communities, and organisations. Inside companies, a lack of correct knowledge led some Japanese LGBT+ individuals to take on the role of “educator”, both willingly and reluctantly. These token (Kanter, 1977) LGBT+ individuals were called upon to answer questions as the assumed bastions of LGBT+ knowledge, amounting to additional workplace labour (Calvard et al., 2020). Thirdly, prejudice based on stereotypes dominated the discourse around SOGI diversity due to a lack of diverse representation of LGBT+ subjects in media and everyday life. Mainstream representation reduced LGBT+ subjectivities to *onē tarento* and *owarai* (“comical”) characters, with some fringe representation of more diverse male queer characters; female queerness remained firmly in the shadows. Wanting to avoid discrimination, or any change in treatment for that matter, Japanese LGBT+ individuals employed selective disclosure in the workplace. Among the J cohort, not coming out had both negative and neutral outcomes, while coming out led to mostly positive outcomes. Coming out was at once seen as a very personal decision, and as a decision that had to consider the anticipated feelings and reactions of others. Taken together, workplace climates of exclusion were characterised by an inability for Japanese LGBT+ individuals to fully participate in both formal and informal processes of the organisation. Despite this, the data found that those in the J cohort who had come out in their workplace had experienced some level of support and acceptance from top management and coworkers. The general consensus was that things were changing, albeit slowly, for the better in terms of workplace inclusion.

In chapter 7, for the E cohort, the core categories of "identity", "safety", and "disclosure" produced a theory dubbed the *gaijin effect*, which described foreigner identity as a moderating variable in the relationship between perceived level of safety and the disclosure decision. As explained in chapter 8, in Japan, foreigner identity was (re)produced daily within and outside the workplace. Drawing on the theory of looking-glass self (Cooley, 1902), it was asserted that, despite intersections with other social categories, the E cohort were viewed, and indeed viewed themselves, primarily through a lens of foreignness. On the one hand, this allowed the LGBT+ expatriate individuals to "play the *gaijin* card" both proactively and reactively, using their assumed cultural or linguistic ignorance to their advantage. On the other hand, expressing their LGBT+ identities through clothing or actions, or explicitly coming out was not necessarily taken seriously in the workplace. Additionally, a clear division in conceptualisations of safety and inclusion surfaced. For the E cohort, Japan was seen as comparatively safer than their home countries for LGBT+ individuals. Feeling safe could be at least partially attributed to the fact that their status as foreigners overshadowed their LGBT+ identities (McNulty and Hucthins, 2016). Feeling safe in Japan allowed LGBT+ expatriate individuals to "be themselves" inside and outside the workplace. They could dress and act in ways that, while in their home countries may be read as "gay" and attract violence, in Japan would be read as "foreign" and be mostly ignored or unchallenged. The E cohort believed that it would be more difficult to be LGBT+ if they were Japanese, further engendering a sense of separateness: unbound by societal expectations in the host country and, at the same time, excluded from full participation in society. However, in spite of the above, it was not a given that LGBT+ expatriate individuals would come out completely. Like the J cohort, they disclosed their LGBT+ identities selectively. For some, coming out was an important mechanism to screen potential employers: gauging the reaction or response of the interviewer, for example, could be an indicator of wider workplace culture (Rynes, 1991). For others, coming out was highly contextual. In line with earlier research (Woods and Lucas, 1993; Rumens and Kerfoot, 2009), talking about and telegraphing sexuality, that is, non-heterosexuality, was seen as unprofessional in the workplace. The data revealed that narratives of inclusion and exclusion centred on the E cohort's foreignness, not their LGBT+ identity. Coming to terms with this, many of the LGBT+ expatriate individuals called Japan their home. They lived comfortable lives, and found friends, partners, and fulfilling jobs.

12.1.2 Study 2

Collecting data on LGBT+ expatriate couples in what would become Study 2 was not planned from the outset of this research. While concluding interviews in Study 1, the researcher was put in contact with a couple that were struggling to stay in Japan due to visa issues. During Study 1, there had only been one interviewee from the E cohort who talked about their visa situation: Leonardo, whose application for a work-related visa had just been rejected by the immigration bureau. In fact, when collecting socio-demographic data in Study 1, a question about status of residence in the E cohort interviews was not included; that information was acquired after the fact. Visa issues and relationship recognition came to feature prominently in Study 2. The expatriate couples cohort (C cohort) grew beyond interviews with couples with the addition of the short-answer survey. This was devised out of necessity as scheduling interviews proved difficult. The survey was also timely given COVID-19 restrictions (Cabinet Public Relations Office, 2020). Widening the screening criteria to include opposite sex couples presented the opportunity to queer heterosexuality by showing how legally and socially a couple may be designated as "heterosexual" when in fact they do not identify as such. Heterosexuality and heteronormativity have become conflated (Rumens, 2018a), and people who do identify as heterosexual, as well as those in ostensibly opposite-sex relationships, may also feel constrained by heteronormative modes of living. The current inquiry made important inroads in understanding the experiences of LGBT+ couples and families expatriating to Japan. It also uncovered important distinctions between the experiences of LGBT+ expatriate individuals and LGBT+ expatriate couples/families. As such, the C cohort faced unique challenges that companies in Japan should be sensitised to. Most notably, the C cohort was characterised by a rapid turnover cycle. The average length of time residing in Japan for the C cohort was 1.5 years, compared with an average of eight years for the E cohort. Given their relatively short period of time in Japan, the expatriation process and cultural adjustment, as well as the relationship dynamic, featured prominently in responses to questions about what the couples had found challenging and rewarding regarding expatriating to Japan.

In chapter 9 (section 9.5.1), using the data collected from the "four core questions" of the interviews and short-answer survey, the *challenging/rewarding continuum* was created. At the challenging end of the continuum was "law" and at the rewarding end were "relationship" and "connections". As discussed in chapter 10, the visa application process proved to be a recurring stressor among C cohort participants. This stressor was characterised by a combination of factors, including: preparing the necessary documentation; interfacing with immigration; a lack of meaningful support from the employer; and waiting for the application result. As a couple or family, there was a lot at stake in terms of "sticking together". However, the expatriation experience was also very rewarding, seen as an adventure, a chance to grow and learn as a couple and as individuals, and an opportunity to forge new friendships. Data from the interviews and short-answer surveys revealed that, regarding their expatriation, the couples had developed a mindset of temporariness. Certainly, from the outset, most of the couples had determined their time in Japan would be a short-term sojourn. However, there were external factors that exacerbated this short-term sentiment: feelings of rejection; a lack of professional development opportunities; and perceived barriers both legal and social to having and raising children in Japan as LGBT+ expatriates. Rejection, both formal and informal, was experienced on the basis of foreigner identity, as it was for the E cohort (e.g., rejection when applying for housing, interpersonal rejection, etc.). However, unlike for the E cohort, formal rejection was also related to LGBT+ identity (i.e., visa application rejection). As a mirror of domestic law, immigration law in Japan rendered the marriages of the same-sex partners invalid. Only through a loophole (i.e., the designated activities visa) could the relationships of the C cohort participants gain some semblance of legal recognition. As well as feeling undervalued and underpaid, those who were employed felt they were stagnating in their jobs. Most of the couples were in their early thirties, and some were ready to settle down and have children. They surmised that this would be most easily achieved in their home countries.

Challenges the C cohort faced could be met with three types of support: organisational support; intermediary support; and partner support. Organisational support described primarily financial support provided by the employer. Support varied from company to company, with some recognising same- and different-sex relationships and extending benefits to the "trailing spouse". Intermediary support described primarily legal support from lawyers in navigating the visa application process, as well as support from real estate agents in navigating the housing search. Intermediaries could be contacted ahead of expatriation and aided in streamlining the process, which in turn relieved the couple's stress and anxiety. Finally, partner support described the emotional support the partners received from each other. Partner support was forged through the shared experience of expatriation and expressed through empathy and the promise of stability in an otherwise tumultuous and uncertain period of time. Ultimately, Japan was not seen as a viable long-term option for most of the C cohort. However, they still wanted to make the most of their expatriation experience by developing friendships and traveling around Japan.

12.1.3 Experiences of privilege and oppression

Although the cohorts were separated for the purpose of analysis in this thesis, there were common threads throughout their experiences. LGBT+ and foreigner subjectivities occupy positions of precarity in Japanese society. Experiences of exclusion were shared by participants across the three cohorts. Throughout this inquiry, the researcher gained the sense that many Japanese LGBT+ individuals wanted to leave Japan, just as many LGBT+ expatriates didn't feel welcome to stay. "LGBT+", "Japanese", and "expatriate" are not homogeneous groups, and how individuals access privilege and experience oppression is shaped by context and their unique mix of identities. This research demonstrated that the LGBT+ "minority" group is not universally and unilaterally oppressed by the cis-het "majority". Rather, as has been argued, individuals move across and between states of privilege *and* oppression. Importantly, this movement is easier for some than others. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) is a useful tool in understanding the outcomes of multiple identity interactions in terms of power. This research focused on the intracategorical complexity (McCall, 2005) of the social identity category "LGBT+". An emic approach (Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012) to data analysis produced four intersecting categories that were salient to the experiences of the participants: "age", "social gender", "nationality", and "marital status". How positionality within and interaction between these categories shaped experiences of privilege and oppression for the participants was detailed in chapter 10.

To summarise the findings: As for age, a clear generation gap existed between older and younger LGBT+ people, with the advent and adoption of the Internet and information and communications technology (ICT) delineating the divide. The younger LGBT+ people had the privilege of ICT know-how, granting them greater access to community and services, and helping them to develop a sense of self. Many of the older LGBT+ people had established families and careers, granting them more stability and certainty. In particular, older gay men were able to access heterosexual privilege through marriage. At the same time, compared to the younger LGBT+ participants they were less likely to be out in the workplace, less willing to engage in education and advocacy, and their conceptualisations of self vis-à-vis LGBT+ identity were more limited. Younger expatriates, especially those who were unmarried, had greater geographic and career mobility. Finally, for trans people specifically, transitioning was generally understood to become more difficult with age. Those who were considering hormone replacement therapies and surgeries had to factor in costs and potential health-related complications, as well as legal barriers to changing the gender on their *koseki* including being married and having children. Regarding social gender, social institutions in Japan, including the workplace, were characterised by a division of gender roles based on the male/female binary. Gender was communicated and performed through clothing, make-up, voice, and comportment, and was policed, particularly among "women". LGBT+ individuals who were gendered as men were afforded male privilege thanks to institutionalised patriarchy. However, their sexuality was erased or conflated with mainstream stereotypes such as *onē tarento*. LGBT+ individuals who were gendered as women felt safer than men to express same-sex affection in public spaces and to talk openly about their sexuality. However, they experienced sexism in the workplace and were excluded from positions of power. Whether intentional or not, it was generally easy for gay cisgender men and women to pass as heterosexual and gain heterosexual privilege. However, this meant that when coming out, they weren't always taken seriously. Gender nonconforming people were met with confusion or unease. There was an overall lack of understanding of and discourse around gender identities beyond the binary. Trans people who could successfully pass as either male or female could access cisgender privilege.

Turning to nationality, LGBT+ Japanese nationals who could successfully perform as "Japanese" were able to navigate the socio-cultural and bureaucratic systems in Japan more easily. They also felt the pressure to engage in normative heterosexual family formation in order to be seen as productive and reproductive citizens. LGBT+ expatriate individuals and couples did not feel they were held to the same standards as their Japanese counterparts. They were able to survive and thrive in liminal spaces. The LGBT+ expatriates were also excluded from full participation in daily society and faced racist microaggressions, their identities reduced to their foreignness. Those who were *hāfu* and/or returnee disrupted the "Japanese/foreign" dichotomy, arguably having greater breadth to construct their identities while also facing unique forms of exclusion such as gatekeeping behaviours (i.e., not being seen as "Japanese enough"), or otherwise being categorised as foreign. Finally, in terms of marital status, it was understood that marriage for Japanese men could unlock the path to promotion, while marriage for Japanese women could interrupt or completely halt their professional careers as they transitioned to child-rearing responsibilities expected of their gender. Meanwhile, unmarried individuals faced economic disadvantage and social stigma. The Japanese LGBT+ individuals, and some of the expatriate individuals, constantly had to navigate questions about relationships, marriage and children within and outside the workplace. Marriage between a man and a woman was seen as a natural course of action in Japan. People in same-sex Japanese and binational relationships could not access the privilege of marriage, despite wanting to. Lacking relationship recognition left them vulnerable in the system. Meanwhile, marriage between same-sex expatriate couples in Japan was recognised to some extent. However, while some of the couples were able to gain access to employment-related benefits and support, they also experienced complications when applying for visas and housing. For the trans participants, marriage negated the possibility of changing their gender designation on their *koseki*. These generalisations are based on the current research and do not necessarily reflect experiences in the wider LGBT+ population in Japan. Thus, they should be interpreted with caution.

In closing, the J cohort was characterised by a soft resistance to the status quo; small daily acts of defiance. Theirs was a queering of the workplace that sought understanding and acceptance through education, gradual change, and the consideration of others. The E cohort was characterised by a sense of safety in the margins; living the dream. They sought camaraderie and inclusion, queering the workplace through nonconformity tempered by professionalism and a love and respect for the host country. The C cohort was characterised by resilience in the face of a system that was not made for them; a temporary and disruptive experience. Theirs was a queering of the workplace that sought space and legitimacy through questioning the rules and breaking new ground. These brief, overarching narratives, although elegant, fail to capture the full breadth and diversity of lived experiences the participants articulated in the interviews and short-answer survey. To be sure, the point of this research was not to position Japanese LGBT+ people as backwards, repressed, or hiding, and “western” LGBT+ people—expatriates as proxy—as morally and culturally superior or liberated. The point of this research was to highlight shared struggles and shared triumphs, and to promote the production of new knowledge and new discourse at the intersections. If we can dismantle social identity categories, even for a moment, and unlock the interconnectivity of people, we can open a dialogue based on shared vulnerability. By attending to intersectional diversity, organisations have an opportunity to create more inclusive workplaces and, beyond that, more inclusive communities.

12.2 Limitations and avenues for future research

The current research responds to several gaps in the literature. First, data collection was conducted in Japan, while most research in the diversity management and expatriate fields of management and organisation studies (MOS) to date has been conducted primarily in American and European contexts. Second, research published in English on LGBT+ workplace experiences in Japan is scarce. Third, extant research has typically focused on the experiences of lesbian and gay employees, while minimising or excluding other LGBT+ identities. Fourth, the interview-based qualitative methodology of this inquiry, utilising grounded theory and an intersectional approach, is a departure from the survey-based quantitative methodology that has dominated the research of LGBT+ workplace experiences conducted in Japan. Taken together, this novel inquiry represents a unique contribution to the MOS literature, using LGBT+ employee experiences as a lens through which to examine critically workplace climates of inclusion and exclusion in companies, as well as systems of privilege and oppression in the context of Japan. However, several limitations should be noted. Specifically, limitations pertaining to the research design and process, the sample, and data analysis and results will be explicated in turn. Potential avenues for future research are also considered.

12.2.1 Research design and process

Regarding limitations related to the research design, the current inquiry relied on a constructivist grounded theory (GT) approach (Charmaz, 2006) in order to collect qualitative data through the use of interviews and a short-answer survey. The researcher had some experience with GT, using it as part of their master's thesis research. However, at that time, the researcher's understanding of GT was limited, and the resulting process and presentation lacked rigour and coherence. The main crux of the GT approach is that the researcher distances themselves from established theories and instead allows new theories to form out of the data. This can be both liberating and intimidating. Suddaby (2006) states: "Grounded theory is not easy" (p. 639). Meanwhile, Böhm (2004) describes grounded theory as *Kunstlehre* (art) that demands creativity on the part of the researcher. The GT approach requires ongoing self-reflection to ensure that biases and assumptions are taken into account, as well as intimate and extensive contact with the research subject and constant immersion in the data. While somewhat guided by recommendations and exemplars in the literature (e.g., Creswell, 2007; Budge, 2010; Timonen et al., 2018), deciding the sample size, how to proceed with coding, when theoretical saturation had been achieved, and how to present the data, was overall an intuitive and pragmatic process. Certainly, the process became more streamlined and refined between Study 1 and Study 2, and the use of Spext and NVivo greatly improved efficiency when it came to transcribing and coding the data. However, the author cautions that the GT approach is a laborious and time intensive endeavour, and may not be practical or realistic for many researchers, especially for those who only have a short amount of time to spend at the site of the research. For those who do decide to pursue this type of research, the GT approach can be a very rewarding experience. Suddaby (2006) is critical of manuscripts in which researchers claim to have performed GT research while failing to sufficiently describe the methodology. Therefore, in the methods sections and also in the appendices, the research process was made as transparent as possible, with detailed descriptions of how the interview and short-answer survey questions were developed, how the participants were selected and recruited, how the interview and short-answer surveys proceeded, and how the raw data were coded and converted to conceptual categories. Also included were the instances where things did not run so smoothly, as well as when changes were made out of necessity due to unforeseen circumstances, such as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this way, this paper can inform as well as inspire future researchers and practitioners to use the GT approach in empirical studies.

With that said, by no means does the researcher consider themselves to be an expert in the GT approach, or in collecting qualitative data in general for that matter. While striving to practice reflexivity, many biases and assumptions were brought into the research. Firstly, particularly in Study 1, the author structured the questions in interview protocol primarily around "coming out" and "workplace barriers and opportunities" (see also appendix F). In this way, the decisions of the participant to disclose information about their LGBT+ identity became the focus of much of the discussion, potentially to the detriment of the research. The author could have instead taken the time to understand the participants' experiences of communicating identity in their own words, as advocated by Scott (2018), rather than framing the experiences as "coming out" by default. To universalise the experience of queer people, and to position coming out as an integral part of that experience, is ethnocentric. Secondly, when referring to the participants, a tendency to append labels and constitute sexuality as a fixed trait became noticeable: "Renata is a lesbian woman"; "Yuki came to accept herself as a lesbian". Further, during the interviews, only the "LGBT+" participants were asked questions about their sexuality, while the assumed "straight" allies were not. In this way, the researcher fell into the trap of treating sexuality as something pertaining only to queer people. Thirdly, the author's academic background was comprised largely of international business, politics, and Japanese. Feminist studies, including intersectionality, and queer theory were well outside the author's wheelhouse. This lack of familiarity could have resulted in many important historical and foundational texts and authors being overlooked, especially in light of the fact that the author delved into these academic disciplines over halfway through the research process.

However, it was not too late to take the opportunity to re-read and re-contextualise the research process and data through queer and feminist lenses, allowing space to acknowledge shortfalls and transform the research practice. For example, in the short-answer surveys, the respondents were given the agency and freedom to identify and define their gender and sexuality in whatever way made sense for them. In writing, the author made a conscious effort to use person first language as much as possible (e.g., "bisexual woman" became "a person who identifies as bisexual"), as well as gender neutral language (i.e., "he or she" became "they"). Language is changing rapidly, especially with regards to identity labels. The terminology used in this paper could be outdated in a few years' time. This fact did not discourage the author from being as inclusive as possible in their language use. A final point on research design: in the current study, power as it was enacted through in-person interaction was the focus. When participants described their workplace experiences, they were by and large describing experiences that took place in a physical space. For an increasing number of people, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, literally “going into the office” is all but a thing of the past. People can do their job remotely, working from home, from outside the city, or even from outside the country. This does not preclude interactions with clients, coworkers, and supervisors. The media through which discussions, presentations, meetings, and events are facilitated has changed: the group chatroom; the video call; the livestream. However, arguably, the same power structures that exist in the physical workplace also exist in the virtual workspace. Thus, the definition of workplace should be expanded to encompass these virtual spaces, and an examination of systems of privilege and oppression in these spaces should follow.

In terms of limitations related to the process, in Study 2, the decision was made to interview the expatriate couples together, rather than one-on-one. The researcher had gained some experience conducting group interviews, including an interview with a couple, in Study 1. The main benefit observed from interviewing the couples together was that they were able to interact with each other, filling in gaps in stories, and sometimes challenging their partners in a productive way. The main perceived downside of interviewing the couples together was that they might have unduly influenced each other’s answers, or otherwise might not have felt comfortable to share certain information or touch on certain topics while in the presence of their partner. Moreover, the group interviews were necessarily much longer than the one-on-one interviews, and more likely to stray from the research topic. This resulted in a lot of discussion that was interesting but otherwise irrelevant to the research questions. As described in chapter 9 (section 9.2.1), in order to minimise influence, the couples were asked to first write down their answers to the “four core questions” without communicating with each other. However, as for the short-answer survey, despite explicitly stating that the surveys should be completed individually, the researcher had limited control over the circumstances in which the questions were answered. The respondents could very well have consulted their partners when answering the four core questions, for instance. Also related to the short-answer surveys, the researcher did not get the survey reviewed before its launch. While the survey was able to be altered in real time based on participant feedback, it could have benefitted for external input in the early development stages. For example, in her study about sexual norms among women who identify as lesbian or bisexual in Japan, after developing the survey items, Fujii (2019) went to volunteer staff at an LGBT organisation to seek feedback. Subsequently, she broadened her target population to include people who were FtM, and added questions that examined gender identity. In the current inquiry, the researcher could have, for instance, sought feedback from groups such as Fruits in Suits or Stonewall Japan so that questions could have been revised or removed entirely, and questions that had not been considered could have been added. Instead, the entire research process was essentially developed and carried out by one person. This research could have benefited from collaboration with others for insight, guidance, and alternative perspectives.

Finally, regarding limitations related to the broader production of knowledge, given the exploratory nature of this inquiry, grounded theory allowed for a breadth of experiences to be validated and represented without the constraint of *a priori* categories or hypotheses testing. This openness to new ideas and interpretations helps to propel the intellectual conversation forward. However, it should be stated that research into LGBT+ workplace experiences needs other research designs, especially those with longitudinal designs. For example, the review of the LGBT+ expatriate literature in chapter 4 (section 4.3.2) found it to be dominated by cross-sectional qualitative research. In Japan, while there have been nation-wide surveys of LGBT+ people, like much qualitative research, these have utilised non-probability samples, so generalisability is limited. That being said, non-probability sampling is arguably the best option when researching the LGBT+ population where privacy may be an issue, as well as the fact that getting a large enough LGBT+ sample size using probability sampling where individuals are chosen at random is challenging. The cross-sectional design of the current research meant that the data collected captured a specific point in time. Further, because the participants were asked questions that prompted them to think about their behaviours and feelings retrospectively, they were necessarily prone to misremembering or responding in a way that reflected their state of mind or emotion at the time of the interview or short-answer survey. A major limitation of the interview is, as articulated by Burchiellaro (2018): "the impossibility of checking whether what participants say is happening is *actually* happening" (p. 767; emphasis in original). To redress this, she combined interviews with 18 months of participant observation conducted among LGBT professionals, "role models", "straight allies" and "diversity and inclusion" specialists in London. Similarly, as explained in chapter 2 (section 2.1.3), in the current inquiry, the researcher corroborated the data collected from the interviews and short-answer survey by participating in several LGBT-related events (see also appendix B). Thus, beyond the qualitative data collected, the research findings reflect conclusions and insights that emerged from broader immersion in the research site.

Of course, being actually able to observe LGBT+ employees in their place of work could reveal greater insights. For example, in line with research of “LGBT-friendly” organisations (e.g., Colgan, 2015), an ethnographic study could be conducted in companies in Japan that have received an award in the PRIDE index. It could, for instance, compare the companies based on their award ranking to see if any discernable difference could be detected in terms of workplace climate for LGBT+ people. The researcher would likely run into myriad challenges, including gaining permission from the company in the first place, operating in a sensitive and ethical manner as not to create issues for the LGBT+ employees, and devising a way to minimise “performative” behaviour (i.e., behaviour that is not “natural”, but is a result of being observed). Rather than the researcher being a direct observer, another possibility could be to utilise diary entries as a form of data collection. As Radcliffe (2017) notes, diary entries can aid in understanding “thoughts, feelings, considerations and reactions [and are able to capture events] as they happen to avoid the problems associated with retrospect” (p. 190). Participants could produce diary entries in written, audio, or video formats. For example, Zundel et al. (2020) drew on video diary entries produced over a four-month period to understand the “identity transition” of an individual becoming a manager of a new organisation. Zundel et al. (2018) provide useful advice for researchers wishing to employ this method. Longitudinal designs such as this could aid in understandings of complex organisational phenomena, and capture data relating to, for example: the changes in LGBT+ employee experiences resulting from the implementation LGBT-friendly policies and initiatives; the process of developing and managing an LGBT+ employee resource group; and the transition into a diversity and inclusion management role as an LGBT+ person.

In terms of studies of LGBT+ expatriates with longitudinal design, future research could collect both qualitative and quantitative data through interviews and surveys conducted at multiple points across their expatriation experience: pre-departure, just settled, six months in, preparing to repatriate, after returning home, and so forth. An interesting finding from the current inquiry was that the company support the LGBT+ expatriate couples received was highly variable. At the time of writing, many of the participants in the C cohort were in the process of leaving, or had already left Japan, repatriating to their home country or expatriating to another country. As such, there was a missed opportunity to conduct follow-up interviews or surveys to gain insight into their reasons for leaving, as well as insight into the resettlement process itself. A comparison with their actual reasons for leaving and their anticipated reasons for leaving could be made, as well as a comparison between their reasons and the reasons articulated by the participants in the TEN group post as articulated in chapter 11 (section 11.2.3). Disparate geographic location of researcher and participants would not be an inhibiting factor. With today's information and communications technologies it is possible to transform the tradition of the in-person interview to that of a video call interview. As an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic, arguably more people have become familiar with and comfortable navigating online video-based communication scenarios. In fact, in the current inquiry, interviews with both of the lawyers consulted were conducted over video call. The researcher was easily able to record the audio for later transcription, although it should be noted that distortion and drops in the audio during the interview were a problem at times. Audio quality is a feature of video calls to keep in mind when conducting interviews in this manner; stable and secure Internet access is vital for everyone involved. Importantly, the point here is not to write off qualitative methodologies as too difficult or too unpredictable to have merit. Within academia, what is deemed as doing science and producing new knowledge has long been subjugated to gatekeeping practices. Objectivity, generalizability, researcher neutrality, and quantitative methodologies have traditionally been touted as "gold standards" for high-quality research while, as a result of systemic biases, more qualitative forms of research, including intersectionality, have been delegitimised and epistemically excluded (Gonzales, 2018; Settles et al., 2020). Ultimately, the research design should reflect the research aims and epistemological stance of the researcher, and the process should be well documented.

12.2.2 Sample

Regarding limitations related to the sample, this research relied on a non-probability sample of LGBT employees, utilising snowball techniques. The sample was quite diverse in terms of age, marital status, industry, and occupation, as well as level of disclosure across life domains. An important research aim was to present the heterogeneity of the LGBT+ community in Japan, rather than positioning it as a wholly oppressed group. However with regards to gender and sexuality, across all three cohorts, the sample was fairly heterogeneous, consisting primarily of gay, cis men. It may be worthwhile to conduct studies that focus on a single LGBT+ subpopulation with a larger sample size. For example, a study of trans people, including people who are MtF, FtM, and non-binary, could be conducted to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities for these individuals, and how the gender binary is (re)enforced in Japanese society. Class bias was also apparent as the majority of participants were highly educated and presumably from middle to upper socio-economic backgrounds. In fact, no income-related questions were asked; the socioeconomic status of the participants was inferred based on indicators such as educational background and living situation. This represents another limitation of the current study. Additionally, the sample only included individuals who resided in the Greater Tokyo Area. Time and resource constraints meant that it was most practical to conduct research in a single geographic region. Research into LGBT+ employee experiences in other parts of Japan could reveal new, and possibly contradictory, insights. For example, Yuki recognised that she felt much more comfortable holding hands and kissing Renata in public in Tokyo—"a big city and there are a lot of people; they are busy about themselves"—compared with her hometown where her family might see her. Meanwhile, Yoshi talked about how he and his partner faced housing discrimination in Tokyo, something that they had not experienced while living in Osaka. Additionally, many of the participants voiced that Tokyo had a distinct social climate, contrasting city and regional area living for LGBT+ people in Japan. Research conducted in countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United States has highlighted discrepancies in legal protections, health outcomes, and support between rural and urban LGBT populations (e.g., Saewyc , 2007; Lyons, 2015; Boso, 2019; see also Rosenkrantz et al., 2017 for systematic literature review). It could be argued that, in comparison to those living in more regional areas, the individuals sampled in Tokyo may have been more willing to disclose and discuss their LGBT+ identity, representing a fairly privileged group with greater and easier access to information and resources. The positive experiences described with regards to coming out and receiving organisational support may be a skewed representation of the overall picture in Japan. On the other hand, the author does not seek to perpetuate rural/urban binarisms in which regional areas are seen as places of intolerance and an absence of LGBT+ community while cities are positioned as the epicentre of queer culture and LGBT+ community acceptance; a theoretical and social bias that Halberstam (2005) calls "metronormativity". There may be many interesting and important sites and narratives of queer resistance and celebration outside of the big cities of Japan that merit scholarly attention.

Of the E and C cohorts specifically, home countries of the LGBT expatriates were found primarily in North America and Western Europe. Further, although there was some ethnic diversity present, the sample was predominantly white. Ethnicity may affect level of privilege, access to social capital and how individuals are perceived by host country nationals. Evidently, in Japan, race-based stereotypes are prevalent, and visual markers such as skin colour are grounds for differential treatment. Speaking about his career, Ashton was cognisant of the fact that the colour of his skin could impact his promotion path. He felt that talking about his sexuality added further complexity, something he was not ready to navigate until he reached a certain level of security in his job. As the Japanese population continues to diversify, understanding the workplace experiences of people from a variety of countries and of various ethnic backgrounds would benefit from ongoing intersectionality research. For example, a recent study by Bebenroth and Nahar (2022), which also utilised grounded theory, compared the working experiences of managers from Bangladesh, a so-called "emerging market", and Germany during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sample also comprised solely of self-initiated expatriates, and therefore the experiences of assigned expatriates were not considered. Future research could explore how companies can better develop and support assigned LGBT+ expatriates pre-departure, as well as during their assignment in Japan. Also, from this perspective, the research examined only those who had undertaken expatriate work. Research should take into account the experiences of LGBT+ individuals who have declined or avoided expatriation and what they see as the challenges that affect them with respect to expatriation opportunities (or lack thereof). Of the C cohort specifically, only one couple expatriated with children. This couple provided valuable insights regarding family recognition and acquiring the dependant visa, which would have otherwise been overlooked. Future research could investigate LGBT+ individuals expatriating as part of various family formations, including expatriate single parents, split family expatriates, or multigenerational expatriate families. Overall, the research questions and aims of this inquiry did not align themselves with any particular industry, occupation, or business size; the researcher employed a catch-all approach. One of the limitations of the "Workplace Diversity Promotion Project" (MHLW, 2020) was that it only sampled businesses with over 50 full-time employees. Several of the participants in the current inquiry worked for businesses with under 50 staff; since a question about business size was not included in either the interview protocol or the short-answer survey, the exact number cannot be ascertained. According to results of the "2016 Economic Census for Business Activity", conducted jointly by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, SMEs account for 99.7 per cent of total businesses and provide 70 per cent of Japan's employment (Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, 2019). As such, the author encourages a more thoughtful and focused attention to LGBT+ employee experiences in SMEs in future research, especially those located in regional areas. Further, a critical discourse analysis conducted by Roper et al. (2010) found that many "boundaryless" career studies focus on the professional elite, neglecting the disadvantages of precarious work arrangements for unskilled workers. Future research could try to capture the experiences of LGBT+ people who are participating in, for instance, Japan's "technical intern training program".

At the end of the interviews, the interviewees were given an opportunity to give feedback and ask questions. Interestingly, despite being a "cultural insider", many took the time to question the researcher’s methods and intentions. This afforded space for reflection and helped the author understand how they could take on the role of both researcher and ally concurrently. Of course, being LGBT+ does not automatically afford empathy for and understanding of other LGBT+ people. Considering identities intersectionally, the researcher is also a younger white cis man. An awareness of how this could facilitate or constrain dialogue with different people was cultivated. Hypothetically, interviewing other younger white gay cis men, it could be easier for interviewer and interviewee to relate. Meanwhile, interviewing people of different ethnicities, genders, sexualities, and ages may be more challenging; it is more difficult to empathise with what you don’t know. Airi, who also had experience conducting qualitative research as a undergraduate student, had this to say: “I mean, for example to be honest if you were a heterosexual researcher, I would have no problem. But at the same time I think I would like, ‘Why are you doing this? If it's not personal what is your interest in it?’” If the researcher was perceived as straight or otherwise had explicitly stated that they were straight, there is the possibility that this could have made recruiting participants more difficult and resulted in less candid interviews. This begs the question: Should we, as researchers, “stay in our lane” and only research groups that we are a part of? The author advocates for stepping out of one’s comfort zone. Of course, researchers might be afraid or even feel it inappropriate to touch on and talk about issues that affect groups they are not a part of. Certainly, there is an enduring legacy in the academy of unequal power relations between those who are the researchers and those who are participants, especially in studies of people who are LGBT+. In research, coming from a place of vulnerability, coming from a place of not knowing, and taking the time to listen can be incredibly transformative. The researcher could have decided to focus solely on the workplace experiences of gay men. Indeed, having gay men readily accessible through dating apps made the recruitment of gay men relatively easy. However, it was decided to try to make the sample as diverse as possible in terms of LGBT+ identities, even at the expense of turning down potential interviewees. This is not to disparage MOS research that does focus only on gay men. This focus provides an opportunity to investigate under-explored intersections. For example, noting the paucity of scholarly knowledge on how age and sexuality shape how individuals practice masculinity in organisations, Rumens (2018b) conducted research examining the impact of age on workplace relationships in the UK (see also Ozturk et al., 2020). This research broadens understandings of masculinities and offers opportunities to disrupt heteronormativity.

In the present study, arguably, of the four social categories explored, “age” was the least developed in terms of power and social justice outcomes. Articulated in the research were more personal (i.e., information-seeking and health concerns) than interactional aspects of age. None of the participants' described age-related inequalities or spoke about their age in the context of the workplace in general. Now that salient identity categories in the context of workplace experiences in Japan have been established, future research could develop questions that more directly and deeply examine these specific intersections. Understanding the intersections of sexuality, disability, and health, including mental health, forms another important yet under-explored line of inquiry. Studies mentioned in this paper (e.g., NHK, 2015; MHLW, 2020; Kimura et al., 2021) included questions on mental health, and results indicated the the mental health of LGBT+ employees, and trans employees in particular, was worse than that of their cis-het peers. For example, a personal contact of the author told their story of living in Japan and struggling to find the treatment and support they needed to manage their health-related challenges. This directly impacted their ability to work. In the end, although they had always thought about living overseas, the frustration with a system that was failing them became the determining factor in their decision to leave Japan as quickly as possible. As Settles et al., (2020) write: "Intersectionality promotes thinking about inequality at the structural level" (p. 10). By sampling LGBT+ people living with disabilities and health-related challenges, future research could investigate how socio-institutional structures such as medicine shape inequality in the working lives of LGBT+ people at the intersections of disability and health. Of course, there are important ethical questions with regards to accessing medical information and privacy that would need to be navigated. Overall, the current inquiry was ambitious in its sweeping overview of LGBT+ workplace experiences in Japan. Now is the time to hone in and dig deeper. This is also a call to scholars to incorporate the intersectional approach into the Japanese language diversity management and expatriate literature.

12.2.3 Data analysis and results

Regarding limitations related to the data analysis, because grounded theory is an interpretive process, the consequent data generated is subjective and thus prone to researcher bias; the researcher single-handedly collected and analysed all the data. Having a second person code the data independently of the research, or seeking feedback on generated codes directly from the participants, could have helped to mitigate this bias. For example, in Budge et al. (2010) it is indicated that all data were "consensus coded", that is, the three researchers discussed their biases during the coding process to keep each other in check. Additionally, all of the participants in the study were contacted and asked to read over their data. This gave the participants the opportunity to object to any of the researchers' conclusions. One way the current study, in line with Budge et al. (e.g., 2010), did address bias was to report findings that contradicted assumptions going into the research. Namely, that most of the participants would have experiences of discrimination, and that not being able to be “completely themselves” in the workplace would have deleterious outcomes. In fact, there were participants who were openly LGBT+ that had very positive experiences inside and outside the workplace. Others did not feel their LGBT+ identity was particularly important to their self-concept, and thus not being open in the workplace was of little consequence. The researcher strove to remain true to the data and report unexpected findings, rather than try to mould the findings into some preconceived narrative. As much as possible, the researcher allowed the data to speak for itself, developing *in vivo* codes and ensuring that the participants own voices were foregrounded, not just when presenting the results, but throughout the entire paper. Again, this research could have benefitted from more collaboration. Arguably, the shortfalls of the data analysis are outweighed by the novelty of the research. Indeed, one of the greatest strengths of grounded theory is that it allows the researcher to remain open to new understandings of the phenomenon under inquiry.

Turning to limitations related to the results, three disparate “theories” emerged from the data analysis: one for each of the three cohorts. The conceptual framework describing the *antecedents and outcomes of workplace climates of exclusion* for the J cohort was developed as a way to visualise the relationship between macro-, meso-, and micro-level processes. That is, societal norms in Japan shape workplace culture, which in turn influences the behaviour of Japanese LGBT+ people. Perhaps seeing this interaction flowing in only one direction is overly simplistic. LGBT+ employees who come out and work to educate their supervisors and coworkers may contribute to shifting workplace climate through changing mindsets and inspiring LGBT+ inclusive policies. Similarly, LGBT+ individuals, as well as organisations, can effect change at a societal level, albeit not easily, through forming coalitions, setting industry standards, and participating in lobbying efforts for rights and legal reform. Moreover, it is difficult to parse causation from correlation. Variables beyond workplace climate, such as personality, may have a greater effect on individual behaviour than external mechanisms. As such, although this framework was useful for presenting and discussing the data in a cohesive manner, its utility beyond this paper may be quite limited. As for the E cohort theory—the so-called *gaijin effect*—again, differentiating causation from correlation is difficult. This theory rests on the premise that the disclosure decision is dependent on perceived level of safety, and that being a foreigner positively influences perceived level of safety. In reality, LGBT+ people may (or may not) come out for a variety of different reasons, and safety may not be a consideration when making the decision. For example, being a foreigner could also mean that you want to set a "good example", be a "model minority", and not stand out any more than you already do. Thus, although you may feel safe in Japan, coming out could actually be seen as counter-intuitive to maintaining a low profile. Testing this theory also presents methodological challenges. Neither the criteria or measure for perceived level of safety, nor the boundary conditions for "coming out" are articulated. Overall, further elaboration of this theory is required to reach any meaningful or generalisable conclusions regarding the hypothesised positive relationship between foreigner identity and safety as an LGBT+ person. Arguably, intersections with other social identity categories, such as race and gender, as well as factors like occupational role and context, shape an individual's sense of safety. Future research could examine differences in perceived level of safety, including physical safety and psychological safety, across a more diverse sample of the foreign population in Japan, as well as, beyond safety, what other privileges and disadvantages the *gaijin effect* yields.

Of the three theories, the C cohort theory, that of the *challenging-rewarding continuum*, is arguably the most promising. The six themes reached theoretical saturation and underwent "quantification" (van Grootel et al., 2020). In other words, a numerical value, in this case a percentage, was assigned to each of the themes so that they could be ranked on a continuum. This percentage value was determined in two different ways: by *frequency* (i.e., overall number of codes) and by *representation* (i.e., number of unique categories). This makes the challenging-rewarding continuum a good candidate for future quantitative research. For example, hypothesis testing through a large-scale quantitative survey could replicate the findings presented here: that interacting with the law in Japan is the most challenging aspect of expatriation for LGBT+ expatriate couples. This would bolster the construct's internal and external validity, and provide more evidence to support the argument that immigration law should be changed to allow the partner in a same-sex relationship to be recognised as a dependent for visa reasons. More generally, it could help to support the idea that laws in Japan should be changed so that recognition, as well as necessary economic and structural support be extended to relationships and family formations beyond those deemed "opposite sex" and "nuclear family", regardless of nationality. A major limitation of how data from the four core questions were analysed and presented was that every category was weighted equally by representation, regardless of number of codes or type of category. For instance, under the theme of "self", there were eight codes for the category *foreigner status*, twelve codes for *personal growth*, twelve for *professional development*, and three for *goals*. Even though there were only three instances where a participant indicated that expatriating (as an individual) was challenging (one code) or rewarding (two codes) with regards to goals, the category was counted toward the aggregate percentage value: once for challenging and once for rewarding. Similarly, under the theme of “adjustment”, codes in the *daily life* category included “grocery prices” and “banking”, while codes in the *housing* category included “housing expense” and “finding a place to live”. Arguably, finding a place to live is a greater stressor than trying to figure out how to do banking in Japan. Yet, the *daily life* category had the same weight as the *housing* category.

Noting a tendency in grounded theory manuals to conflate the terms “theories”, “models”, “frameworks”, and “schemas” (e.g., Bryant, 2017), in their view, Timonen et al. (2018) see achieving greater conceptual clarity through constructing categories and articulating links between them as a sufficient outcome for a grounded theory study. Examining the workplace experiences of LGBT+ individuals in Japan, rather than producing fully fledged theories, the current inquiry brought attention to an understudied population and made previously unexplored connections between phenomena and the wider systems within which they played out. Every workplace is different, and making generalisations based on such a small sample, as well as in light of the other limitations discussed here, is precarious. What was demonstrated well in this research was how to detect patterns in the data. It also presented a novel approach to transforming qualitative data into quantitative data. Through understanding systems of privilege and oppression as they manifest at multiple and intersecting dimensions of difference, it is the hope of the author that the results presented here can complement social justice goals. For example, this paper can contribute to the marriage equality conversation, providing further empirical evidence that legal reform, through amending the constitution and changing immigration law, will make it easier for LGBT+ people who want to make a life in Japan. Moreover, it could be a resource for diversity and inclusion management practitioners that envisage more inclusive workplaces and a more inclusive Japan, not just for people who are LGBT+, but for all.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Comparison of laws relating to sexual orientation across G7 countries

Country	National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) includes sexual orientation		Protection based on discrimination of sexual orientation				Recognition of relationships			
	Yes	No	Employment	Other	Hate crime	Incitement of hate	Marriage	Civil Union	Joint Adoption	2nd parent adoption
United States			*							
England										
France										
Germany										
Japan	Does not have NHRI									
Italy										
Canada										

Source: Compiled from the ILGA "State-sponsored homophobia report" (2017). Available at: <https://ilga.org/state-sponsored-homophobia-report> *The United States does not protect LGBT employees at a federal level, but several states have enacted non-discrimination policies in their employment laws.

Appendix B: Outline of participant observation in the field

Event	Location and date	Scale of event (small > 100, medium 100-200, large 200+)
Fruits in Suits: “LGBTQ Finance 101” (Seminar and networking)	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Minato City; October 2017	Small
“Getting to Know George Takei” (Q&A discussion)	Waseda University, Shinjuku City; November 2017	Medium
Tokyo Rainbow Pride (Festival)	Yoyogi Event Plaza, Shibuya City; May 2018, April 2019	Large
AFS Intercultural Programs, Japan: “LGBT and International Exchange” (Seminar)	Mitsuya Toranomon Building, Minato City; May 2018	Small
“LGBTI and Corporate Activities” (Panel talk)	United Nations University, Shibuya City; June 2018	Large
“Merits of Diversity in the Company” (Seminar)	Embassy of France, Minato City; June 2018	Medium
“Boys for Sale” (Documentary screening and Q&A with director)	Sophia University, Chiyoda City; July 2018	Small
“Of Love and Law” (Documentary screening and Q&A with director)	Euro Space, Shibuya City; September 2018	Small
“Rainbow Diet No. 3” (Panel talk)	House of Representatives, Chiyoda City; December 2018	Large
“Over the rainbow” (Documentary screening and Q&A with director)	PorePore Higashinakano, Nakano City; December 2018	Medium
“LGBT and Media Representation” (Panel talk)	Dentsu Hall, Minato City; January 2019	Medium
Marriage for All Japan: “Same-sex marriage lawsuit support event”	Nagatacho GRID, Chiyoda City; February 2019	Large
Mr Gay Japan 2019 Final (Awards ceremony)	Case B, Shibuya City; March 2019	Medium
Session with Toho Medical School students (Group discussion)	Toho University Omori Campus, Ota City; May 2019	Small
International Gay Rugby: International Inclusivity Challenge (Rugby match)	Sankei Sports Centre, Misato City; October 2019	Large
“Zero as you are” (Documentary screening and Q&A with director)	Uplink Shibuya, Shibuya City; August 2019	Small
Colourful Heart: LGBTQ Expats & Minority Stress (Webinar)	Livestream on YouTube; January 2022	Small

Appendix C: Demographics and Introduction (Japanese LGBT+ individuals cohort)

Name	Age	Gender/ Sexuality	Industry	Occupation/Position	Term of Employment
Takeshi	51	CG M; Gay	Transport (airline)	Manager/Trainer; FT	26 years
Haru	47	CG M; Gay	Social services	Manager/Trainer; FT	7 years
Daiki	41	CG M; Gay	IT (software development)	Consultant/Specialist; FT	3 years, 3 months
Okabe Rin	54	MtF trans W; Straight	Advertising	Director (finance division); FT	21 years
Jun	40	CG M; Gay	Law	Lawyer association; SE	10 years
Hide	45	CG M; Gay	IT (semiconductor)	Director of HR; FT	9 months
Kenmoku Shogo	33	CG M; Gay	Education	Classroom Teacher; FT	3 months
Ichikawa Georgie	35	CG M; Gay	Fashion (design)/Marketing	Creative Director; SE	6 months
Ken	31	AFAB M; Gay*	Manufacturing (Toys)	Modeller; FT	5 years, 6 months
Yuki	29	CG W; Lesbian	Media (graphic design)	Graduated Assistant; FT	8 months
Kazuki	37	CG M; Gay	Media (broadcasting)	Producer; FT	15 years
Ami	29	CG W; Lesbian	Digital media; Music	Videographer; FT (also singer/songwriter)	1 month
Mizuki	25	CG W; Pansexual	Service (business); Student	Desk host, PT (also post-grad student)	1 month
Airi	24	CG W; B, P, queer	Service (hospitality); Student	Bartender, PT (also post-grad student)	1 year, 6 months
Yoshi	51	FtM trans M; Gay	Media (printed)	Recruitment/Career Advisor; FT	29 years
Shin	33	CG M; Gay	Real Estate	Sales; FT	6 months

Notes

- Gender/Sexuality: CG = cisgender; M = man; W = woman; B = bisexual; P = pansexual. *Ken was assigned female at birth (AFAB) and identifies as a gay man.
- Position: FT = full-time, PT = part-time; SE = self-employed

<u>Takeshi</u>

Worked for a large airline company for over 25 years; company had a diversity training program that included LGBT-related content (was not open about his sexuality)

Takeshi was married with two sons (20 and 16). He first met his wife in New Zealand in his 20s, and at the time understood he was gay; they would marry 10 years later. Takeshi had been dating a man in his 30s for the past 6 years. He was committed to maintaining his marriage. He felt that coming out would destroy his family, and so kept his life as a gay man separate. He worried about bumping into someone from his professional life while in a queer space, or while with his male partner.

<u>Haru</u>

Social worker for 7 years; cared for adults with disabilities; small organisation that did not include LGBT-related content in training (was not open about his sexuality at work)

Haru identified as gay. His father died when he was young. After studying abroad in England in his early 20s, he felt comfortable coming out to some people after returning to Japan. Initially, his mother reacted negatively, but gradually came to accept him and his partner. As a single parent, she could relate to his plight of being treated differently in Japanese society. At work he felt isolated from his coworkers. Haru also volunteered as a counsellor for a suicide hotline, wanting to help others who also felt isolated. Living in Japan felt suffocating for Haru at times.

<u>Daiki</u>

Worked as a consultant for a very small software development company for just over three years; no LGBT-related training or resources (was not open about his sexuality at work)

Daiki was Haru's partner. He believed that sexuality is a personal matter, and did not feel the need to come out to his parents or in his workplace. While in law school he came out to a classmate who went on to become a lawyer (Daiki graduated but did not pass the bar exam). He felt a little bit guilty as a closeted gay man. While he could enjoy gay life, he recognised that being visible in society could help affect positive change.

<u>Okabe Rin</u>

Director of finance division of Dentsu Inc. subsidiary company; 21 years at company (transitioned in current workplace)

Rin was married and had a 16 year old son. At work, she was a woman, and at home she presented as a man. After laying the groundwork through communications with the parent company, Rin came out at work in a very explicit way by sending a blanket email to her entire company. She had just published a book detailing her journey titled *sōmubucho wa toransujendā: chichi to shite, onna to shite* and maintained a blog: *mainichi ga toranjishon* – Everyday Transitions. Someday, she hoped to share this information with her son. At the time of the interview, she was focused on being a father to her son. **Rin spoke almost exclusively in Japanese during the interview.**

<u>Jun</u>

Practicing Lawyer for 10 years (was not open about his sexuality professionally)

Jun was in a domestic relationship with a man from France. He came out to his family after attempting suicide. His father did not accept his sexuality. He was concerned that if he came out professionally, he would lose clients. Jun was a strong proponent of personal rights and personal choice. At the same time, he felt ashamed for not being more involved in LGBT activism. He was interviewed together with Rin and Tomoko, and helped with interpreting.

Hide

Director of HR for a semiconductor company; former manager of the Diversity and Inclusion Department in the Japan subsidiary of a U.S-based multinational; Diversity program in current workplace prioritising the promotion of women in management positions (was not open about his sexuality at work)

Hide was of mixed heritage; Japanese father and Korean/Russian mother. He was born in Australia but grew up in Japan and was bullied at school for his femininity. Before coming out to his mother as gay when he was 16, he explored his bisexuality. His mother received the information very well, and his father came to accept after a time. He felt that coming out in his current place of work would require a lot of time and effort, and was reluctant to take on the role of educator.

Kenmoku Shogo

Mr Gay Japan 2018; teacher at international school (selectively out at work)

Shogo was the winner of the inaugural Mr Gay Japan. He had a partner from Australia, and made a life there before moving back to Japan in 2018. Although his win had thrust him and his sexuality into the spotlight, he was not out to his parents who live in rural Japan. At work, he had complete support from the principal, but was the subject of gossip among his Japanese coworkers. At the time of the interview, he was preparing to participate in Mr Gay World 2018, to be held in Knysna, South Africa.

Ichikawa Georgie

Freelance fashion designer and creative director of Mr Gay Japan (was open about sexuality professionally)

Georgie was of mixed heritage—Japanese father and (white) English mother—and was interviewed with Shogo. He returned to Japan in 2014 after living in England from the age of 16. In the fashion industry, Georgie deployed his sexuality to distinguish himself from others. Although his parents knew about his sexuality for many years, he was surprised and touched by his father's earnest involvement in the Mr Gay Japan project. Along with his partner, and the chairperson for Miss Grand Japan, Georgie headed the committee for Mr Gay Japan.

Ken

Modeller for Saitama-based toy manufacturing company for five and a half years; no policies relating to LGBT (transitioned before current job; was not open about sexuality at work)

Ken was assigned female at birth (AFAB). He was abandoned by his biological mother as a baby, and raised by his father and stepmother who eventually separated. He maintained a relationship with his brother and three sisters who also lived in Tokyo. Feeling different all his life, he began taking hormones at 20, and completed surgery in Thailand at 23; his *koseki* was changed accordingly. Although there was an out lesbian in his workplace, he did not want to come out. He feared he would be defined by his sexuality. Ken had just secured a one year working holiday visa, intending to move to Canada in April 2019.

Yuki

First year working as a graduated assistant for a small graphic design agency; no policies relating to LGBT (selectively open about sexuality at work)

Yuki was Renata's partner; they were interviewed together. Yuki began questioning her sexuality at age 19 while studying at university in the United States, and came to understand herself as lesbian at 23. She had just moved back to Japan after working at a design studio in Los Angeles for two years. She was out to her boss and to some of her coworkers. She indicated that she would come out to her other coworkers if asked directly. Although she felt comfortable holding hands and kissing Renata in public in Tokyo, she said she would not feel comfortable with public displays of affection in her hometown.

Kazuki

15 years working for a television network that broadcasts across Japan; moved to news division in 2017; company has anti-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity (open about sexuality at work)

Kazuki identified as gay. He acknowledged his sexuality at 13, and found acceptance from his peers throughout his years at school. He came out to his family in his 20s. When he first entered his company, he found it difficult to come out. However, after a stint as a journalist reporting on LGBT issues, he started to open up to his coworkers. In an official information session, Kazuki interviewed the speaker as an openly gay man in front of a group of 200 employees. He worked with a *rōdōkumiai* (labour union) to expand the definition of the anti-discrimination policy at his company to include sexual orientation and gender identity. Kazuki was also advocating for same-sex marriage support.

Ami

Recently began working as a videographer for a U.S.-based news and entertainment company; also an R&B/soul singer; insurance and family benefits that are inclusive of LGBT employees (open about sexuality at work)

Ami was videographer as well as a singer/songwriter. Citing lack of information and discussion, throughout her school, she didn't understand who she was and experienced internalised homophobia. When she was 20 she moved to New York and met her first girlfriend, prompting her to wonder if she might be transgender. However, after dating another woman who accepted her in the body she was in, Ami embraced her lesbian identity. Born into a family of artists, she found understanding and acceptance. As a lesbian woman, Ami felt that coming out as an individual is a form of daily activism. She wanted to be the Ellen of Japan.

Mizuki

Recently started working as a desk host for a coworking space in central Tokyo; also working on master's degree; no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work)

Mizuki identified as pansexual. She was born in Japan and spent 3 years in the United States from the age of six. Upon her return, she experienced culture shock, and felt at odds with Japanese society. She came out in 2015, after being prompted to question her sexuality during a conversation with a queer activist. Her brother was supportive, but she felt that her parents do not take her seriously, which was frustrating for her. Mizuki was pursuing queer studies and gender studies at university. She had been politically active since 2015, helping to organise one of the protests against the remarks of LDP legislator Sugita Mio in 2018.

Airi

One and a half years working as a bartender for a bar in Shinjuku; studying to get into grad school; no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work)

Bucking definitions, if she did have to identify herself, Airi said that she was a bi, pan, queer person. A feminist, politically active, and editor-in-chief of a queer feminist magazine, she was born in Japan, but grew up in the United States. When she returned to Japan at the age of 14, she found it difficult to conform to what it means to be a woman in Japan. She dated men while struggling internally, and it wasn't until 2016 while studying abroad in Spain that she realised that she was attracted to women too. Embracing pansexuality, Airi said she was attracted to people with androgynous traits. At the time of the interview she had a partner, who was lesbian, and had explicitly come out to her father but not to her mother.

Yoshi

29 years working for large printed media company; transferred from Osaka to Tokyo office in 2018; no policies relating to LGBT (transitioned in current workplace)

Yoshi was an FtM trans man and identified as gay. He started his transition in 2000, and through ongoing discussions with HR, he felt tolerated but not supported in his place of work. Yoshi said he felt pride in his gay identity, but that a sense of shame surrounded his trans identity. After breast surgery he came out to his parents. He had not gone through with genital surgery and was worried about the potential impact to his health. Yoshi had just married his partner of 10 years. This was possible because he remains registered female on his *koseki*. Moving to Tokyo was stressful and isolating, and he wished to return to Osaka. **Yoshi spoke almost exclusively in Japanese during the interview.**

Shin

First year working in sales for a small real estate agency; no policies relating to LGBT (was not open about sexuality at work)

Shin identified as gay. He was interviewed with Yoshi and also acted as interpreter. For a long time he felt very negative about his sexuality, and it was only after living in Australia during his twenties that he became more accepting of himself. He opened up to his friends about his sexuality but no one else. He was comfortable passing as a straight man, although he did feel some pressure from his parents and society in general to get married to a woman and have children. After seeing one of his coworkers at Tokyo Rainbow Pride, he was considering coming out at work. Having lived in Australia and Canada, Shin dreamed to start a new life in an English-speaking country.

Appendix D: Demographics and introduction (LGBT+ expatriates cohort)

Name	Age	Gender/ Sexuality	Country of origin	Time in Japan	Status of residence	Industry	Occupation/Position	Term of employment
David	31	CG M; Gay	USA	8 years	ESI	IT (Start-up)	CTO (Cofounder); FT	4 years
Ashton	40	CG M; Gay	USA	11 years	ESI	Automotive	Assistant manager (product planning); FT	17 years (11 in Japan)
Leonardo	25	CG M; Gay	Italy	2 years	Temporary visitor	Fashion (design)	Stylist, PT	3 months*
Carlos	27	CG M; Bisexual	Panama	5 years	ESI	Tourism	Tour Leader/Co-ordinator; FT	2.5 years
Márcia	40	CG W; Lesbian	Brazil	20 years	Permanent resident	Government (consulate)	Passport renewal; FT	11 years
Petra	26	CG W; Pansexual	Sweden	6 years	ESI	Media (photography)	Retoucher (assistant); FT	1 years
Renata	33	CG W; Lesbian	Mexico	5 years	ESI	Media (entertainment)	Projection designer; FT	6 months
Michelle	23	CG W; Bisexual	USA	1 year	ESI	Sales and HR (recruitment)	Consultant; FT	1 year
Skye	41	Non-binary; Pansexual	UK	19 years	ESI	Education; Music	Consultant; IC (also free-lance musician)	16 years
Ruth	31	Non-binary; Bisexual	USA	2 years	ESI	IT (software development)	Designer; FT	6 months

Notes

- Gender/Sexuality: CG = cisgender; M = man; W = woman;
- Status of residence: ESI = Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services
- Position: FT = full-time, PT = part-time; IC = independent contractor (*gyōmu itaku*)
- Term of employment: *At the time of the interview, Leonardo was unemployed, having had a total of three months' work experience in Japan.

David

Cofounder and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of a Japan-based IT start-up founded in 2014; company supported the Open Japan Project and was working toward holding diversity events and implementing non-discriminatory policies (openly gay at work)

David was from the United States. Coming from a deeply religious background, it took him a long time to accept himself, and he had only embraced his sexuality in the past three years. While he still maintained a relationship with his family, he was aware of the distancing that had occurred since coming out. He was very open about his sexuality in his workplace, and recognised that, as someone in a position of power, his visibility as a gay man was important.

Ashton

Recently appointed to assistant manager in product planning division of a Japan-based automotive multinational; LGBT-related content had been included in mandatory sexual harassment training and in the bi-monthly diversity report (not open about his sexuality at work)

Ashton had been living in Japan for the past 11 years after transferring with his company from the United States; 17 years with company in total. He dream was to be CEO. He averred that, if he obtained the position of CEO, he would feel much more comfortable with the prospect of coming out in his professional life. In his personal life, he was out to his mother and one of his nephews. He described himself as a cautious person, and was a quiet supporter of LGBT-related activities in his workplace, participating anonymously in company-disseminated surveys.

Leonardo

3 months working as a stylist at small fashion company with stores in Tokyo (unemployed at time of interview); no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work)

25 years old and from Italy, Leonardo had been living in Japan for two years initially on a student visa. After coming out to his best friend and being positively received, he decided to come out to his parents, who did not react well. While in Japan he felt the freedom to start wearing clothes designated "women's" and found a thriving gender-defying fashion scene in Harajuku. In the end, despite sponsorship from the company he had been working for, he was denied a work visa. Instead he transitioned to a short-term stay visa. Feeling out of options, when the visa expired in October, Leonardo would leave Japan. He remained optimistic about finding somewhere he could be himself.

Carlos

Two and a half years working as a tour leader and coordinator for a company that specialises in tours for groups visiting Japan; formally worked in a gay bar in Ni chōme; no policies relating to LGBT (selectively out in workplace)

Carlos had been living in Japan for 5 years. From Panama, he was not out to his family, and was concerned that he would be shunned by his father and step-father who maintained a machismo attitude. Carlos felt very comfortable in his bisexuality, while recognising that society harbours many misunderstandings and stereotypes about bisexual men. There were other LGBT individuals in his workplace. He believed that finding the right person for the job is more important than filling some sort of diversity quota. His long-term goal was to stay in Japan and develop his creative writing.

Márcia

11 years working in passport renewal at the Brazilian consulate in Tokyo; no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work)

Márcia first came to Japan with her mother over 20 years ago. Japanese Brazilian, she began to understand her sexuality during university. Her parents passed away before she came out to them. She had come out to some, but not all, of her siblings. In Japan, she felt safe, although sometimes held back from opening up to people. Numerical representation of LGBT individuals in her workplace normalised conversations about same-sex partners. Márcia missed Brazil, and if a job opportunity with sufficient compensation came up in her home country, she believed she would take it.

Petra

First year as assistant retoucher for a small photographic company; no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work)

From Sweden, Petra first came to Japan on a high school trip, and decided from then that it would be her home. She had been living in Tokyo since 2013, and had just begun working full-time after graduating from a *senmongakkō* ("technical college"). Petra was estranged from her immediate family, but had a good relationship with her grandmother, aunt and cousin. She recognised her bisexuality from a young age and, upon further research, found the word pansexual fit her well. She believed that it is redundant for companies to tout themselves as “LGBT-friendly”, arguing that basic respect should be afforded to everyone.

Renata

Just started working as a designer for a small projection mapping company with main office in Singapore; no policies relating to LGBT (not open about sexuality at work)

Renata was from Mexico and identified as lesbian. She was 33 years old and had been living in Japan for almost 5 years. She completed a graduate program at an art university in western Tokyo. She was very aware of her sexuality from a young age, and came out to her best friend when she was 15 years old. Her sexuality was a very personal matter and she only explicitly came out to her mother at 28. She didn’t feel safe coming out in her current workplace. Renata was perplexed by all the “new” categories that people use to define their sexual orientation and romantic preferences.

Michelle

Working as a consultant for a recruitment agency for one year; sexual harassment policy includes sexual orientation (open about sexuality at work)

Hailing from the United States, Michelle first came to Japan as an exchange student during her undergraduate degree. She was studying in rural Yamanashi Prefecture and had a girlfriend at the time, to the surprise of many of the Japanese students she met. She initially came out as lesbian when she was 18, but had since realised that she was bisexual. Coming out a second time was difficult for her family to understand. Michelle said that finding work in Japan was stressful because there were only a few companies willing to sponsor visas, outside of English teaching jobs. She enjoyed a very comfortable lifestyle and could see herself living in Japan long-term.

Skye

Independent contractor at an English education company for 16 years; active musician; no policies relating to LGBT (openly transitioning at work)

Skye was born in Wales and lived in Hong Kong from the ages of 10 to 18. Soon after moving to Japan in her twenties, she came out as gay and was subsequently ostracised by her father. Serious health issues in her thirties prompted Skye to explore her identity more deeply. She came to realise that she was trans, and decided to take steps to present herself in a way that aligned with her self-concept. She had only recently started using female pronouns, after a situation with a friend’s son made her feel uncomfortable. She was also considering taking hormones and receiving gender confirming surgeries.

Ruth

Just started a new job working as a designer for a small international IT company; also working on an app for queer users; no policies relating to LGBT (open about sexuality at work; not open about gender variance)

Ruth first came to Japan during her undergraduate degree and did a homestay for a year while studying. After 10 years back in the United States, she returned to Japan with her husband and their cat in 2017. For the networking app that she is developing, Ruth was vetting local coffee shops around Tokyo to ensure they are safe spaces for queer individuals to meet. She was also involved in the hiring process of new employees, and was trying to provide more opportunities for women, whom she recognised as an underrepresented demographic in the IT industry. Identifying as polyamorous, she had a female partner. Ruth’s pronouns were she and they.

Appendix E: Introduction (LGBT+ allies)

<u>Tomoko</u>

Account Director at an advertising agency

Tomoko worked in the same company as Rin at the time she came out as trans. She took Rin out for her first *joshikai* (girls-only gathering). Tomoko introduced the researcher to Rin, and helped interpret during the interview, while also providing her own insights. Tomoko said she was fortunate to have had the chance to work with Rin, and was proud of her former company for supporting Rin during her transition and beyond.

<u>Kaneko Midori</u>

External board member for Adways Inc.; managed Fruits in Suits Japan (FinS); managed Lawyers for LGBT and Allies Network (LLAN)

Midori had had a long and successful career in PR and communications, establishing herself in many companies including GE, Nestlé and Citigroup. Outside of work commitments, she was involved with many NPOs including FinS and LLAN. Although she advocated for the LGBT community, she did not consider herself an ally. Open to sexual fluidity, she questioned her own sexuality, inspired by friends who identified as bisexual. As a mother herself, Midori was passionate about working with other mothers in supporting their LGBT children, recognising the family as the smallest unit of society, and that discriminatory attitudes and behaviours are taught.

<u>Yanagida Kasumi</u>

Self-employed wedding planner of Hummingbird Wedding since 2012; catered to LGBT couples

Kasumi was born and raised in Tokyo. She felt hesitant to identify as heterosexual, acknowledging the complexity of sexuality. After feeling disappointed with her own wedding, she decided to start her own business to support couples navigating the wedding industry. Although it took some time to develop trust, she persisted in solidifying ties with the LGBT community. Being quarter Bulgarian, Kasumi experienced bullying as a child because she did not have typically Japanese facial features. She developed empathy for people who are treated differently, and wanted to be an ally for all minority groups. Kasumi explained that her mission in the wedding industry was to make it *atarimae* (normal) for LGBT weddings to be held in every venue in Japan.

<u>Nanami and Rika</u>

D&I team leader and Director of HR respectively for Tokyo 2020 (organising committee for the Olympic Games); developed a Diversity and Inclusion Handbook, a sustainability plan, and held various LGBT-related events

Nanami and Rika were interviewed together as representatives of Tokyo 2020. Nanami had previously worked for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government before being assigned to this organisation committee. Rika had worked for Tokyo Gas. They were working closely with an external consultant to enrich the workplace with several educational events and materials that included LGBT content. However, citing the temporary nature of the organisation, they recognised there were no policies in place that directly benefited LGBT employees. They said that they did not know of any openly LGBT people in the organisation. **Rika spoke almost exclusively in Japanese during the interview, and Nanami helped interpret.**

Appendix F: Interview protocol example (Japanese LGBT+ individuals and LGBT+ expatriates)

Name:	Occupation/Industry:	Mode of Employment:
Age:	Position:	Relationship Status:
Identity marker:	Tenure:	Date of interview:

<u>Coming out</u>

1. Have you come out to: Family Friends Coworkers Supervisor Clients Anyone?
2. **If no:** If you came out to your (Family/friends/coworkers/supervisor) do you think your situation would become better, worse, or remain about the same? (Probes: Why do you think that? What do you think their reactions would be?)
3. **If yes:** Before coming out, what was your experience like in the workplace? (Probes: coworkers' reactions? What kinds of support did you need from your workplace? What was the best part? The worst part?)
4. **If yes:** After coming out, what has your experience been like in the workplace? (Probes: coworkers' reactions? What kinds of support did you need from your workplace? What was the best part? The worst part?)
5. What would your current employer have to do (if anything) for you to consider coming out in your place of work? (Probes: What kind of policies/benefits/training?)
6. Have you participated in any LGBT-related events? (Pride parade, roundtable discussion, information session, contest, etc.)

<u>Workplace opportunities and barriers</u>

1. Do you know if LGBT-supportive policies exist in **your** company? (Probes: what are they? Is this information easily accessible?)
2. Do you know of any other LGBT individuals in your workplace? (Probes: If so, what is your relationship with these individuals like?)
3. Are you currently working at a career/job that you consider ideal? (Probes: If yes: What makes it ideal? If no: What has gotten in the way of your ideal job or career? What would your ideal job/career be? What would you need to do in order to find this job?)
4. When seeking employment, what conditions do you consider important? (Probes: Do you want to work for an employer that you could come out to? What kinds of policies are important to you?
5. What does **LGBT-friendly** mean to you?

Appendix G: Interview protocol example (LGBT+ allies)

Name:	Occupation/Industry:	Mode of Employment:
Age:	Position:	Relationship Status:
Identity marker:	Tenure:	Date of interview:

Your work and background

1. Could you tell me a little bit about your background, and what projects and occupations you are currently invested in?
2. Manager for Fruits in Suits and LLAN, among many other responsibilities. I'm wondering, where did the passion or interest in participating in these organisations come from, and would you consider yourself an advocate for LGBT+ rights?

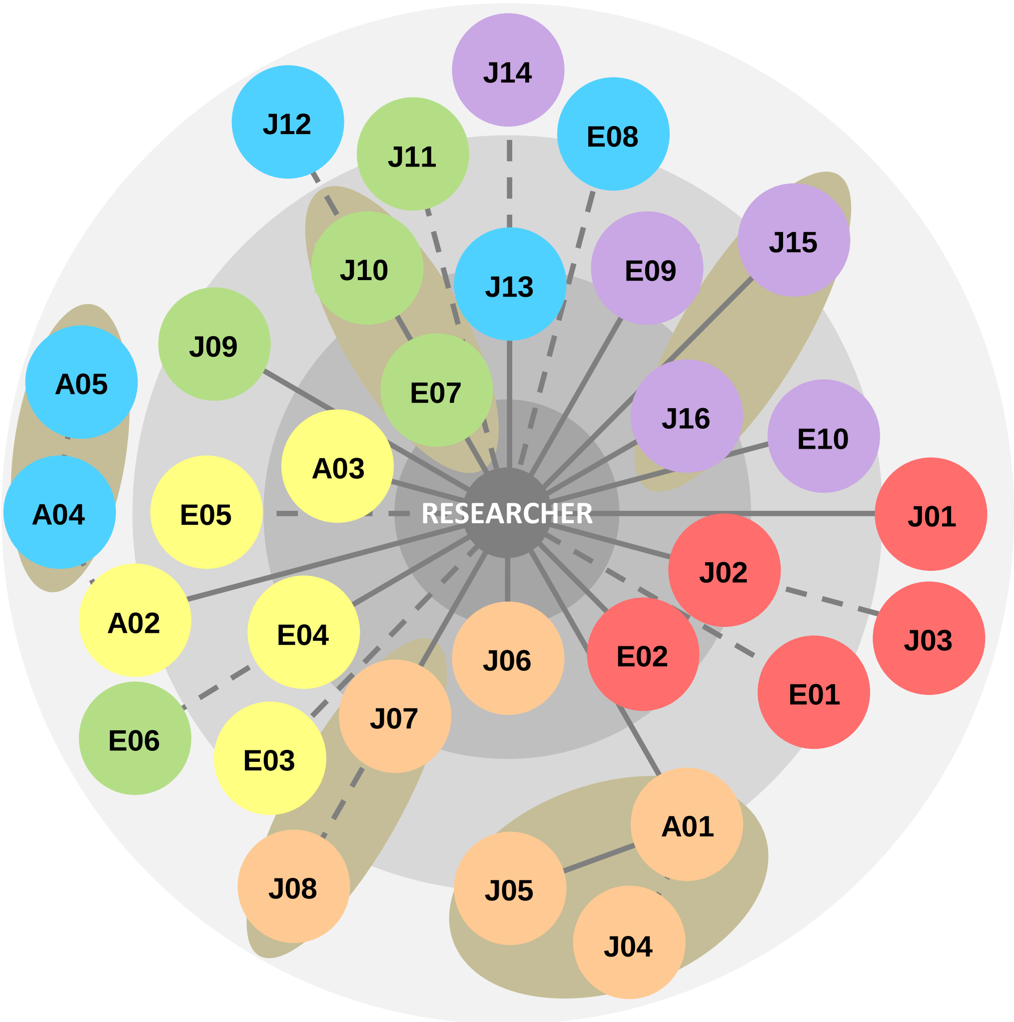
Reflection on advocacy and action in Japan

1. How do you see efforts to increase or celebrate diversity in the workplace in Japan; where have we come from; what more can be done?
2. I'm wondering if you could reflect on LGBT-related events, such as pride parade or seminar; what seems to be effective; what is ineffective?
3. What does it mean to be an "LGBT-friendly" company in Japan; an LGBT-friendly society?

Being an ally

1. What does it mean to be an ally of LGBT in Japan; what criteria would you deem critical?
2. As an ally, what would you tell others who want to get involved in advocacy work, but maybe don't know where to start; How can we raise awareness and educate others?

Appendix H: Interviewee recruitment map (Study 1)



Unbroken line = direct recruit (i.e., personal contact; networking)
Broken line = indirect recruit (i.e., intermediary; snowball sampling)
J = Japanese LGBT+
E = LGBT+ expatriate
A = LGBT+ ally
= Group interview

Appendix I: Informed consent form

I am Joel, a PhD student of J.F. Oberlin University. I am doing research on the LGBT+ population within Japan to fulfil the requirements of my program. Currently in Japan, no legal protections exist to prevent refusal of employment or dismissal of employees based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Lacking anti-discrimination legislation, companies are not obligated to introduce LGBT-friendly policies or provide training or resources that will potentially benefit LGBT+ employees. The present study seeks to understand the role of companies and the wider business community in fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces. As part of my research, I am conducting interviews with employees and employers of companies in Japan, as well as other key informants, in order to a) discover what (if any) support mechanisms are available to LGBT+ employees in their current place of work, and b) understand the unique challenges facing LGBT+ employees in the workplace. Your assistance in this matter appreciated.

I ____(hereafter the "interviewee"), have willingly agreed to participate in this interview conducted by__________________________________ ______________ (the "interviewer"). The interviewee acknowledges that the information they provide in the following interview will be used solely for academic purposes. The interviewee acknowledges that the interview will be audiotaped, and then transcribed verbatim. The audio recording and subsequent transcript will not be made publicly available. The interviewee's real name, and any other identifiable information, will not be used in any written manuscript or public presentation unless prior permission is obtained from the interviewee. Finally, the interviewee acknowledges that this interview is being conducted on a purely volunteer basis, and that they will NOT receive any form of compensation (monetary or otherwise) for their time. The interviewee will receive a copy of this document at their request

Signature of Interviewee: ___________________________________ Date: _____________________

Signature of Interviewer: ___________________________________

Appendix J: Demographics and introduction (Expatriate couples cohort—interviews)

Name	Age	Gender/ Sexuality	Country of origin	Status of residence	Time in Japan	Industry	Occupation/ Position
Amando	34	CG M; gay	Italy	Researcher	9 months	Science (brain)	Postdoc research; FT
Nathan	35	CG M; gay	New Zealand	Short-term stay	9 months	-	Unemployed
Sebastian	30	CG M; gay	Argentina	ESI	3 months	Service (translation)	Project manager; FT
Lionel	29	CG M; gay	Argentina	Designated activities	3 months	-	Unemployed
Sarah	29	CG W; D bisexual	USA	ESI	4 years	Service (education)	Product development; FT
Grace	29	CG W; D bisexual	USA	ESI	4 years	Service (education)	Product development; FT
Wolfgang	30	CG M; gay	Austria	Designated activities	6 months	Marketing	Consultant; PT
Tobias	23	CG M; gay	Austria	Intra-company	6 months	Automotive	Engineer; FT
Selena	28	CG W; P, bisexual	USA	ESI	5 years	Service (corporate events)	Web marketing; FT
Elsa	33	CG W; D, A, B questioning	Germany	ESI	1.5 years	Education	English teacher; IC

Notes

- Gender/Sexuality: CG = cisgender; M = man; W = woman; D = demisexual; P = pansexual; A = asexual; B = bisexual
- Status of residence: ESI = Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services
- Position: FT = full-time, PT = part-time; IC = independent contractor (*gyōmu itaku*)

Amando and Nathan

Amando and Nathan represented the epitome of the expatriate couple. Hailing from Italy and New Zealand respectively, they met in London, and married in Australia. Due to visa complications, their new chapter together in Japan was cut short.

Unhappy in Brisbane, Amando was ready to take a job at a research institute in Japan offered by a former lecturer from his time in London. Nathan had studied Japanese, and was excited for the chance to get a part-time job and improve his language ability. After coming to Japan on a two week trip in 2018, they established contact with a Hiroshima-based immigration lawyer who expressed some reservations about securing a visa for Nathan. Undeterred, and encouraged by Amando's soon to be boss, they went ahead with the plan to have Nathan transition from a tourist visa to a designated activities visa.

However, their confidence began to falter as soon as they arrived; obstacle after obstacle took a heavy toll. Four months of waiting for a response from the immigration office regarding Nathan's application ended in rejection. As they understood it, the visa was denied because a certificate of marriage from both their home countries was required; their Australian marriage certificate would not suffice. Recognising a consistent lack of support from Amando's workplace, and decidedly unwilling to endure the many more months of uncertainty reapplication could bring, they conceded defeat, and made plans to leave Japan. At the time of the interview, Nathan was due to leave for New Zealand in December 2019, and Amando would join him in February 2020.

<u>Sebastian and Lionel</u>

This was Sebastian and Lionel's first expatriation experience. **Living comfortably together in Argentina, friends and family were initially perplexed by their decision to move so far away. At the time of the interview, Lionel's designated activities visa had just been granted.**

For Lionel, moving to Japan represented a "now or never" opportunity, and for Sebastian, the process of expatriation signified a 'common goal' for them to pursue as a couple. Sebastian had studied Japanese and living in Japan was always a remote fantasy. Holidaying in Japan in 2017, Lionel suggested that the couple expatriate together, and after six months of deliberation, Sebastian agreed. His employer in Argentina had an office in Tokyo, and he was able to secure a position as project manager. After considering other visas, they determined that the designated activities visa was the only option for Lionel; they wanted to be recognised as a family in Japan. They married in January 2019, and soon after began consultation with a Tokyo-based lawyer who was recommended by HR at Sebastian's company.

Lionel entered Japan as a temporary visitor; 90 day visa. Sebastian was occupied settling into a new workplace, while Lionel was unemployed and had too much time on his hands waiting for his visa application to be processed. Stress became an everyday reality, which lead to fights. Lionel's mood entered a downward spiral, and he was ready to hear that his application had been rejected so he could buy a plane ticket home. Receiving his residency card, Lionel was reinvigorated, and Sebastian felt confident that the hardest part was over. In the midst of this tumultuous two and a half months of waiting, Lionel was offered a job by Sebastian's manager out of the blue, delivering the possibility of a transition from the designated activities visa to a work-related visa.

<u>Sarah and Grace</u>

Before coming to Japan, Sarah and Grace had already expatriated together, spending almost two years in Thailand. They were from the United States, and had met on a study abroad program in India. After four years in Tokyo, they were ready to return to their home country, contemplating marriage and children.

Both Sarah and Grace never thought they would live in Japan. Grace is half Japanese but culturally more connected to Hawaiʻi than to Japan. Sarah visited Japan with family, and worried that if she lived in Japan she would be expected to adhere to strict social standards. Further, when they moved back from Thailand to California, they thought that would be the end of their time abroad. Then, within the first month on the job, Grace met the CEO of the company that would bring them to Japan. He immediately offered her a job and, after meeting Sarah, extended the invitation to her. They were initially hesitant to accept, but after almost six months of being propositioned, they agreed to a trial, and came to Japan for a week in May 2015.

Coming as individuals on engineer/specialist in humanities/international services visas, Sarah and Grace are legally single. Although the CEO knows they are a couple, they are not open about their relationship in the workplace, and are seen as "good friends". Since being with the company, a cycle of abuse has plagued them. As well as being excluded from meetings and treated like outsiders, Grace and Sarah have been reduced to a single "foreigner" unit, stripped of their individual identities. How race and gender intersected featured in discussions around differential treatment. Grace wondered if they would have had a different experience if one of them were a man. At the time of the interview, they had one week left of employment. They would continue to work as external consultants, in order to finish a project they helmed, with the intention of leaving Japan in June 2020.

Tobias and Wolfgang

As a couple, this was Tobias and Wolfgang's first expatriation experience. In order to apply for the designated activities visa, they got married ahead of their original schedule. Although they received a lot of benefits from Wolfgang's employer, when they thought about raising children, they did not see a future in Japan.

Wolfgang and Tobias first came to Japan on two-and-a-half week holiday in 2017. In the year following, Wolfgang had the opportunity to return on a business trip. They had never intended to live abroad, but one day out of the blue, Tobias floated the idea, inspired by a coworker who moved with their partner to Shanghai. Expatriating to Japan as a couple seemed like an unrealistic idea, but after Wolfgang consulted his boss in December 2018, it suddenly became a reality. A position in Japan was available and the company wanted Wolfgang immediately as an intra-company transferee. Taking a risk as a contract had yet to be signed, Tobias quit his job in April 2019, and they came for a one-week orientation trip, in order to look for an apartment, and for Wolfgang to become familiarised with his new workplace. HR in Japan was responsible for the visa process, and this was their first time to accommodate a same-sex couple.

Unsure of how to proceed, they worked with a law firm and were directed to the designated activities visa. Originally planning to marry in August 2020, they instead got married in June 2019; same-sex marriage had just been legalised in Austria in January. A translated marriage certificate was required for the designated activities visa, and after arriving in Japan, the application took three months to be processed. Granting permission to work for up to 28 hours a week, Tobias secured a part-time job. Wolfgang's company provided generous benefits to the couple, including free Japanese language classes and yearly paid flights back to Austria, but when it comes to matters of tax, health insurance, and pension, he and Tobias were not considered a family. Maintaining a mindset of Japan having an "expiration date", Tobias and Wolfgang wanted to make the most of time they have, taking advantage of opportunities to travel domestically.

Selena and Elsa

Selena was from the United States, and Elsa was from Germany. Japan brought them together, and represented "neutral ground" to start a life together. With Selena's visa set to expire in 2021, they were contemplating where to live next.

As a student of the arts interested in acting and filmmaking, expatriating to Japan was an opportunity for Selena to get uncomfortable in order to grow as a person; a "humanity-forming" experience. Elsa studied Japanese and her goal coming to Japan was to develop language fluency. Elsa and Selena met in a share house they were both living in. Spending time with Selena, Elsa began to question her sexuality. As her working holiday in Japan came to a close, she opened up to Selena about her feelings, and the two decided to stay in contact. They established a long distance relationship: Selena remained in Japan and Elsa went to Korea on another working holiday. After cutting her working holiday in Korea short, Elsa returned to Japan and the two moved in together. As a couple from two different parts of the world, ensuring conditions that allow them to stay together had been challenging.

Elsa returned to Japan on an Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services visa with a job at a nursery school secured. In the end, the nursery school did not employ her at a full-time capacity as planned, so she got a second job at an *eikaiwa* (English conversation) company as a *gyōmu itaku* (subcontractor). Elsa, worried about the legality of her situation, did not inform the immigration bureau about the *eikaiwa* job. Uncertainty around job security and the visa renewal process, along with the fear of natural disasters and the corona virus pandemic, culminated in stress and anxiety. Selena recognised Japan as a very safe, comfortable country to live in. However, she felt conflicted about coming out in her workplace, concerned she will not be able to explain everything in Japanese, and also not wanting to be put on the spot as "the one" to set the precedent. Ultimately, Selena did not see a future for her and Elsa in Japan.

Appendix K: Demographics (Expatriate couples cohort—short-answer survey)

Name	Age	Gender/ Sexuality	Country of origin	Status of residence	Time in Japan	Industry	Occupation/Position
Ian	35	CG M; Gay	USA	Designated activities	9 months	-	Unemployed
Martin	34	CG M; Gay	USA	ESI	9 months	Service (consulting)	Director; FT
Yusuf	40	CG M; Gay	Netherlands	Designated activities	7 months	NGO	Project manager; PT
Greg	37	CG M; Gay	Australia	ESI	7 months	International NGO	Regional HR operational advisor; FT
Jack	34	CG M; Queer	USA	Instructor	8 months	Education	Teacher; FT
Roy	40	CG M; Gay	USA	Designated activities	8 months	-	Unemployed
Joanna	35	CG W; Bisexual	USA	ESI	2.5 years	Service (legal)	Vice President; FT
Mark	37	CG M; Heterosexual	USA	Dependent	2.5 years	Education	Teacher; PT
Sofia	32	CG W; Heterosexual	Germany	Intra-company	8 months	Pharmaceuticals	Chief of staff; FT
Karl	40	CG M; Heterosexual	Germany	Dependent	8 months	Music	Disk jockey; SE (also musician)
Olena	31	CG W; Heterosexual	France	Professor	7 months	Academia	Researcher; FT
Dirk	39	CG M; Bisexual	Luxembourg	Dependent	7 months	IT (security)	Engineer; FT
Brendan	30	CG M; Gay	USA	ESI	1.75 years	Corporate investigations	Consulting manager; FT
Seth	29	CG M; Gay	USA	ESI	1.75 years	Real estate	Accountant; FT
Ruth	32	Non-binary; B, Queer	USA	ESI	2.5 years	IT	UX Designer; FT
Luke	31	CG M; Queer	USA	Dependent	2.5 years	IT	Freelance software engineer; SE

Notes

- Gender/Sexuality: CG = cisgender; M = man; W = woman; B = bisexual
- Visa status: ESI = Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services
- Position: FT = full-time, PT = part-time; SE = self-employed

Appendix L: Introduction (Lawyers)

Wakui Noriko

Administrative Attorney; Attorney at Law (New York); 8 years at Nakai Immigration Services LPC

Noriko came from a family of lawyers. After completing *hōgakubu* (law school) in Japan, she went to Boston University to study international banking and finance law, before going on to work in intellectual property licencing in New Hampshire, USA. Returning to Japan, she worked in trademark licencing for an American company. Then, becoming a registered *gyōsei shoshi* (administrative scrivener), she started working for Nakai Immigration Services LPC. Established in 1992, Nakai Immigration served mainly corporate clients, and filed dozens of applications at local Immigration Services Bureaus of Japan daily. Noriko explained that prior to 2013 they saw roughly three to six cases a year involving visa applications for a same-sex partner, and Noriko herself had worked with at least four or five same-sex couples. In May 2013, France legalised same-sex marriage. Recognising the surge in countries adopting marriage equality laws, the Immigration Bureau of Japan stipulated that marriage certificates would be required when couples applied for the designated activities (DA) visa. By recognising the marriage of same-sex couples abroad, applying for the DA visa ironically became more complicated for same-sex expatriate couples. As a result, Nakai Immigration worked with only two to three same-sex couples each year. Noriko hoped that in the near future the dependent visa would be available to same-sex married couples from abroad.

Alexander Dmitrenko

Head of Asia Sanctions at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer; Co-representative Director and co-founder of Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network (LLAN)

Alexander first came to Japan in 2009, working for four years at a Japanese company. After a short stint in The States, he returned to Japan in 2015 and secured a position with Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. Alexander was qualified to practice in the US, England and Russia, and in Japan as a *gaikokuhō jimu bengoshi* (attorney at foreign law). In his role as Head of Asia Sanctions he specialised in compliance, and had clients across Asia. At the time of joining Freshfields, the managing director, who was also gay, wanted to contribute to the field of LGBT equality. Having been involved in the marriage equality movement in Canada in 2000, Alexander had a professional interest as well as a personal stake in LGBT rights in Japan. Subsequently in 2016, he met Fujita Naosuke during an event and, recognising a void in the community, they went on to establish LLAN. They recruited both domestic and international firms, and burst onto the scene with a gala event just a few months into LLAN's existence. Since then, they have held a gala every year to celebrate achievements as well as announce important initiatives. During the 2018 gala the viewpoint on marriage equality (VME) was introduced. A statement was issued by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, alongside four other Chambers, recommending that the Government of Japan extend the right to marry to LGBT couples. At the time of the interview the VME had been endorsed by 107 organisations, including Panasonic and Softbank. Alexander also co-edited the "Foreign Law Report on Equal Marriage" (2017; unpublished) prepared by LLAN. In 2019, Nichibenren (Japan Federation of Bar Associations) submitted a written opinion to the government calling for swift legalisation of same-sex marriage, and Alexander explained that Nichibenren relied heavily on LLAN's report in the sections that document marriage law in other jurisdictions. Alexander believed that achieving marriage equality in Japan was just a matter of time and a matter of consensus.

Appendix M: Interview protocol example (LGBT+ expatriate couples)

Interviewee:	Length of time in Japan:	Mode of employment:
Age:	Industry:	Education:
Identity marker:	Position:	Japanese ability:
Visa:	Tenure:	

Expatriation experience

1. Please think about and write down three things you found/continue to find **challenging/rewarding** regarding **expatriation as a couple**. Specifically things that the couple are required to do together. (5 minutes to write down, then ask one at a time; Probes: are these challenges/rewards a result of being LGBT, or are they a result of being an expatriate?)
2. Please think about and write down three things you found/continue to find **challenging/rewarding** regarding **expatriation as an individual**. The individual navigating the host country (5 minutes to write down, then ask one at a time; Probes: are these challenges/rewards a result of being LGBT, or are they a result of being an expatriate?)
3. Have you had previous expatriation experience? **If yes** Probes: how would you compare it to the Japan experience?

Coming to Japan

1. Why did you choose Japan as host country, and what was the **process** you went through to get here? Probes: what was difficult; what was easy? Tell me about the **visa** situation.
2. What were your **expectations** before coming here? Probes: what met your expectations; what was contrary to your expectations?
3. Do you feel your workplace is **meeting your needs** as an LGBT expatriate? Probes: help me to understand where they are aiding/failing you in regards to you being an **LGBT individual**; help me to understand where they are aiding/failing you in regards to you being an **expatriate**.

Next Step and Reflect

1. What are your **goals/aspirations** for the next year/3 years/10 years? Probes: how has coming to Japan helped you move towards these goals?
2. Please think about and write down three things you think Japan is **doing well/could improve upon** in terms of facilitating LGBT expatriates. (5 minutes to write down, then ask one at a time)
3. Would you **recommend** Japan as a host country to other LGBT couples? Probes: what **advice** would you give them? What advice would you have benefitted from before coming to Japan?

Appendix N: Select short-answer survey questions

1. Please write down three (3) things you have found challenging, as a couple/family, during your time in Japan.
2. Please write down three (3) things you have found rewarding, as a couple/family, during your time in Japan.
3. Please write down three (3) things you have found challenging, as an individual, during your time in Japan.
4. Please write down three (3) things you have found rewarding, as an individual, during your time in Japan.
5. What were your reasons for expatriating to Japan?
6. Overall, how would you describe your experience securing a visa for Japan?
7. Did your employer help you secure your visa/your partner’s visa/your child(ren’s) visa?
8. Did you work directly with a lawyer in order to secure your visa/partner's visa/child(ren)'s visa?
9. Do you feel your employer is meeting your needs as an expatriate couple/family?
    9a. If yes, what has your employer done for you (e.g. recognise relationship, insurance/medical covers partner/child(ren), housing considerations, etc.)?
    9b. If no, what could your employer do to better meet your needs as an expatriate couple/family?
10. Have you experienced discrimination as an expatriate couple/family in Japan?
    8a. If yes, please elaborate on your experience.
    8b. If no, do you ever worry about being discriminated against as an expatriate couple/family?
11. Overall, how do you feel you have been treated as an expatriate couple/family in Japan?
12. Please list three (3) things you think Japan is doing well in terms of facilitating expatriate couples/families.
13. Please list three (3) things you think Japan could improve upon in terms of facilitating expatriate couples/families.
14. Would you recommend Japan to other expatriate couples/families?
15. What advice would you give other couples/families wanting to expatriate to Japan?

Appendix O: Interview protocol example (Lawyers)

1. Please tell me a little bit more about your background as an attorney: experience, area of expertise, client-base.
2. What are the typical steps involved in obtaining a visa for employees of a corporate client or for an individual client?
    a. Is the process significantly different in the case of same-sex couples? If so, please elaborate.
3. Can you give me any indication of how many same-sex couples Nakai Immigration Services has worked with?

Current immigration law

1. In Japan, how are same-sex couples, including same-sex expatriate couples, legally recognised/defined?
2. What can you tell me about the development of the designated activities visa (DAV)?
    a. What kind of people utilise the DAV?
    b. When was the DAV first considered a viable option for same-sex couples?
3. Are there any statistics available regarding the prevalence of DAV use by same-sex couples in Japan?

Moving forward

1. Do you feel that current immigration law in Japan adequately serves same-sex expatriate couples?
    a. What are its limitations?
    b. What alternatives/amendments would you suggest/have been suggested by others?
    c. How can Japan become a more attractive option for same-sex expatriate couples?
2. Are we seeing any kind of movement towards marriage equality/recognition of same-sex marriage by the government and/or legal system in Japan?
3. What advice do you have for a same-sex couple wanting to expatriate to Japan?
    a. What resources/information would be useful to them?