

# Effects of Same-Sex Marriage Policy on Social Attitudes toward LGBTQ People: A Policy Evaluation Perspective

Rakpong Sansri<sup>1\*</sup>, Tanawan Vorasingha<sup>2</sup>, Lanliya Samsuwan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Administration, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

<sup>2</sup> International College for Sustainability Studies, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

<sup>3</sup> Chulabhorn Research Institute, Thailand

\*Corresponding Author Email: [rakpsa@kku.ac.th](mailto:rakpsa@kku.ac.th)

Received: 31 August 2022; Revised: 5 October 2022; Accepted: 24 October 2022

## Abstract

*This article was aimed at reviewing and synthesizing the literature on policy evaluation respective to the effects of same-sex marriage policy on social attitudes toward LGBTQ people. It used qualitative approach. Policy evaluation was applied as the conceptual framework of synthesis. All research articles published since 2000 onwards in the English language and in the international journal databases related to the impacts of the same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and legalization on social attitudes and public opinion toward LGBTQ people were the population. Data were analyzed by article analysis tool. The results of synthetic review indicated that all research articles inclusive for synthetic review adopted econometric analysis as the framework of policy evaluation. Those inclusive research articles revealed similar findings; that is, the implementation and adoption of same-sex marriage policy could improve social attitudes toward the LGBTQ people. In this article, directions for future research on policy evaluation of same-sex marriage policy were discussed.*

**Keywords:** LGBTQ; Policy Evaluation; Same-Sex Marriage Policy; Social Attitude

Copyright © 2022 by Authors, Published by Pusat Penelitian Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora Kontemporer, Indonesia. This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>).

**How to Cite:** Sansri, R., Vorasingha, T., & Samsuwan, L. (2022). Effects of Same-Sex Marriage Policy on Social Attitudes toward LGBTQ People: A Policy Evaluation Perspective. *Journal of Contemporary Governance and Public Policy*, 3(2), 101-116. <https://doi.org/10.46507/jcgpp.v3i2.83>

**Permalink/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.46507/jcgpp.v3i2.83>

## Introduction

The same-sex marriage policy has been the topic for heated debates and discussions for more than decades (Sloane & Robillard, 2018; Daniels, 2019), and it posits that same-sex marriage policy can lead to the shift in social attitudes toward sexual minorities (Rebecca J. Kreitzer & Tolbert, 2014; Pereira & Monteiro, 2017; Roberts & Marx, 2018; Aksoy, Carpenter, Haas, & Tran, 2018). The attempts to legalize same-sex marriage is grounded on the assertion that it is the fundamental human rights, and homosexual couples have the rights to marry (McDonough, 2005; Kertzner, 2009). Human rights should be applied to all human beings. In principle, all human rights are equal. When a country or a state does not realize the equality of same-sex couples by not recognizing their partnership or marriage, that country or state fails to treat them equally. All human beings have the rights to marry (Chamie & Mirkin, 2011; Brown, 2016). Because marriage is a form of social approval, it would be difficult for sexual minorities to be in a relationship without social approval (Badgett, 2011; Riodan, 2014). A handful of studies have suggested that same-sex couples without same-sex marriage recognition or legalization would face negative consequences (Herek, *Sexual Orientation Differences as Deficits: Science and Stigma in the History of American Psychology*, 2010) such as sexual orientation discrimination (NeJaime, 2012), health problems (Lau & Stroh, 2011), mental health problems (Leblance, Frost, & Bowen, 2018), partnership instability (Herek, *Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships in the United States: A Social Science Perspective*, 2006), and suicide (Knaani & Laur, 2021). At present, 30 countries permit the same-sex couples to marry in a lawful manner (Drabble, et al., 2021). Even if same-sex marriage is legalized, inequality, barriers, and oppositions persist (Leblance, Frost, & Bowen, 2018; Kennedy & Dalla, 2020). However, the implementation of same-sex marriage policy allows homosexual couples to function their lives as any other heterosexual people in the society (Mule, et al., 2009). it provides a wide range of benefits to same-sex couples. Examples of those benefits are access to partner's health coverage (Gonzales, 2014; Carpenter, Eppink, Jr., & McKay, 2021), improved mental health (Teo, Metheny, & Chum, 2021), health (Ogolsky, Monk, Rice, & Oswald, 2019), partnership stability (Chen & Ours, 2020; Kennedy & Dalla, 2020), and the rights to adopt children (LGBT parenting) (Takacs, Szalma, & Bartus, 2016).

To advance the field of policy, public policy evaluation is needed (Patton, Sawicki, & Clark, 2016). Public policy evaluation is critical and part of the public policy process. Public policy process is broadly divided into four to five stages: agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy evaluation (Anderson, 1976). Theoretically, policy evaluation takes place at the final stage of the public policy process. On the other hand, it can be involved in every process of public policy ranging from problem identification, policy analysis, policy development, policy enactment to policy implementation. In general, the purposes of policy evaluation are to evaluate whether policies have attained the desired objectives and determine the continued relevance of policies and whether they should be discarded or amended (Ferris, 2015). After the policies have been passed by the legislature and implemented by the relevant

government authorities, the next step is a policy evaluation (Khan & Rahman, 2017). The results from policy evaluation would support policy making, policy development, and policy decision making. Policy evaluation can be treated as a feedback loop that allows policymakers to see the problems of policies when being implemented. It can be performed in various ways. The policy impacts or the long-term consequence evaluation is an evaluating method in addition to formal evaluation, client satisfaction evaluation, outcome evaluation, and cost-benefit evaluation. The criteria for evaluating the policy impacts include positive or negative effects, primary or secondary long-term effects, direct or indirect effects, and intended or unintended effects. The purpose of same-sex marriage law is to gain society's approval for same-sex couples from the general people (Riordan, 2014). Public opinions or social attitudes can be used to evaluate the policy impacts of same-sex marriage law toward homosexual people. Whether it produces positive or negative effects on social attitudes toward LGBTQ people is an evaluation of the policy impacts of same-sex marriage law.

The movement of same-sex marriage recognition began in the late 1970s in Western and Northern Europe but in a gradual manner. In the early days, same-sex marriage recognition was in the form of partner relationships. These relationships were defined as same-sex couples who were permitted to conclude lawful relationships. Nevertheless, their rights were not as equal as heterosexual couples. For example, same-sex couples were not allowed to adopt children. At that time, many countries did not grant the rights for same-sex couples to marry; instead, they offered registered partnerships (Kuzelewska, 2019). In 1989, same-sex couples in Denmark were allowed to register as domestic partners. In December 2000, Netherlands was the first country that legalized same-sex marriage, which allowed LGBT individuals to marry, divorce, and adopt children. Those countries that allow same-sex marriage to marry include the Netherlands (2000), followed by Belgium (2003), Canada (2005), Spain (2005), South Africa (2006), Norway (2008), Sweden (2009), Iceland (2010), Portugal (2010), Argentina (2010), Denmark (2012), Uruguay (2013), New Zealand (2013), France (2013), Brazil (2013), England and Wales (2013), Scotland (2014), Luxembourg (2014), Finland (2015), Ireland (2015), Greenland (2015), United States (2015), Colombia (2016), Germany (2017), Malta (2017), Australia (2017), Austria (2019), Taiwan (2019), Ecuador (2019), Northern Ireland (2019), and Costa Rica (2020), respectively. The largest number of legalized same-sex marriage was in Europe the majority of which were the Western European countries. In Ireland, the legalization of same-sex marriage was made through the referendum whereas other countries legalized same-sex marriage by the governments or the parliaments. There are some countries that have not yet legalized same-sex marriage, but civil unions are recognized to demonstrate marriage equality for same-sex couples (Donà, 2021). In the U.S., same-sex marriage is legal in 50 states (Drabble, et al., 2021). In Asia, Taiwan was the first country that granted the rights to same-sex couples to marry (Chang, 2020; Huang, 2020).

A growing number of studies have explored the attitudes toward same-sex marriage and revealed that gender, religiosity, age, education, and homophobia were the significant predictors of attitudes toward same-sex marriage and LGBTQ individuals

(Sloane and Robillard 2018). Gender difference was found to influence the attitudes toward same-sex marriage, and heterosexual males were not much supportive of same-sex marriage compared to heterosexual females, which was caused by gender role beliefs (Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2010). Heterosexual males tended to have a negative belief that the relationship of homosexual couples were unstable and unhealthy. Males showed stronger oppositions to gay men than lesbians. Religiosity was identified as a factor that affected the heterosexual people's attitudes toward same-sex marriage. In Western countries, the level of religiosity that the heterosexual people had was related to with negative attitudes toward same-sex couples (Whitehead, 2014; D'Amore, et al., 2020). In other words, religion beliefs could shape individuals' attitudes against same-sex marriage and LGBTQ people (Janssen & Scheepers, 2019; Dreier, Long, & Winkler, 2020). Age could predict the attitudes toward same-sex marriage and the homosexuality. Older people showed negative attitudes toward same-sex marriage and homosexual individuals. Younger generations demonstrated their supports for same-sex marriage, having positive attitudes toward sexual minorities (Schwartz, 2010). Education was found to influence the attitudes of heterosexual people toward same-sex marriage and LGBTQ people. Those with a high level of education tended to be more supportive to same-sex marriage policy than less-educated male and female individuals (Ohlander, Batalova, & Treas, 2005; Webb & Chonody, 2014). Homophobia was a predictor of the heterosexual people's attitude toward same-sex marriage and homosexual individuals. It was a negative attitude of male and female people, and the degree to which male and female heterosexual people were homophobic was different (Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2010). However, men were more homophobic to same-sex marriage than women. Heterosexual male was more homophobic to gay men than lesbians because they favored lesbians over homosexual male.

Since the first same-sex marriage legalized in 2000, a wealth of empirical research has examined the attitudes toward the legalization of same-sex marriage in dimensions of public health, education, employment, and workplace. On the other hand, the studies on same-sex marriage policy in the policy evaluation dimension have been scattering. As far as the objectives were concerned, this synthetic research reviewed and synthesized the literature that examined the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, or law on social attitudes toward the LGBTQ people. It was expected to contribute to the literature on the public policy evaluation of both adopting and implementing the same-sex marriage policy. Theories, conceptual framework, analytical methods employed in related literature would be assessed. Besides, the findings obtained from the synthesis would pave the ways for future research on the policy evaluation of same-sex marriage policy.

## **Research Methods**

Policy evaluation was the concept of public policy process that was adopted to conduct the synthetic review. The results found from synthetic review were expected to demonstrate the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, or law on people's

attitude toward those sexual minorities. Most importantly, such results would provide the directions for future research on policy evaluation of same-sex marriage policy.

### Search Strategy

As any other research works that indicated their methodology, qualitative approach was utilized to conduct this synthetic review. All research articles published in the English language and in the international journal databases related to the effects or impacts of the same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on social attitudes and public opinion toward LGBTQ people were treated as population. Those international journal databases that had been searched were EBSCO Host, Springer, Sage, and Oxford. Besides, Google Scholar was also used to search for the potential research articles that explored the issues in question.

### Key Terms

Key words used for searching the research articles in the databases included policy, same-sex marriage, and attitudes toward LGBTQ. In addition to key words, this research also used a group of words or phrase to identify and review the research articles. Such group of words was the impacts of same-sex marriage policy on people's attitudes. Law, legalization, and legislation were the terms that had been found in the existent literature of policy evaluation research. By nature, they were part of the public policy process. Law, legalization, and legislation were studied in terms of their effects of same-sex marriage on the society's attitude as well. To have the maximum number of relevant studies, laws, legalizations, and legislations were incorporated to ensure the broadest coverage of the synthesis.

### Selection Criteria

Research articles that would be considered for inclusion should be those that were primary research studies, synthetic or systematic reviews and that were published since the year 2000 onwards to indicate the impacts, the trends of, or the shift in the people's attitude toward homosexuality as a result of adopting and implementing same-sex marriage policy. Apart from the international journal databases, the research articles produced by institutes were also counted if they reported empirical evidence and the following keywords: same-sex marriage law, legislation, policy, and attitudes toward homosexuality. The terms laws, legalizations, and legislations were encompassed in reviewing and synthesizing the research articles because they were found in the context of public or social policy together with an examination of social attitudes. The research articles qualified for the synthesis must be written in the English language.

### Data Extraction

The initial assessment of research articles eligible for inclusion was performed by screening the identified 4,523 articles starting with their titles and abstracts. A second screening was carried out to include only eligible research articles that matched the criteria by performing full-text assessment. At this stage, there were 39 full-text articles assessed for eligibility. After the full-text assessment, only 8 research articles were

qualified for synthetic reviews. They had been published by Springer, Sage, Oxford, and two institutes. Exclusion criteria were defined as those research articles that did not show or report the issues of interests. As found from the search results, there were a larger number of articles on the topic of attitudes toward same-sex marriage; however, they did not investigate the impacts or effects of same-sex marriage policy, law, and legislation. The details of literature search were depicted in Figure 1.

### Synthesis method

To ensure the consistency of synthetic reviews and to derive the impacts, the trends, or the shift in the people's attitude toward LGBTQ after the adoption and implementation of same-sex marriage policy, it was necessary to create a synthesis tool. In this research, there were two tools that had been established to carry out the synthetic reviews.

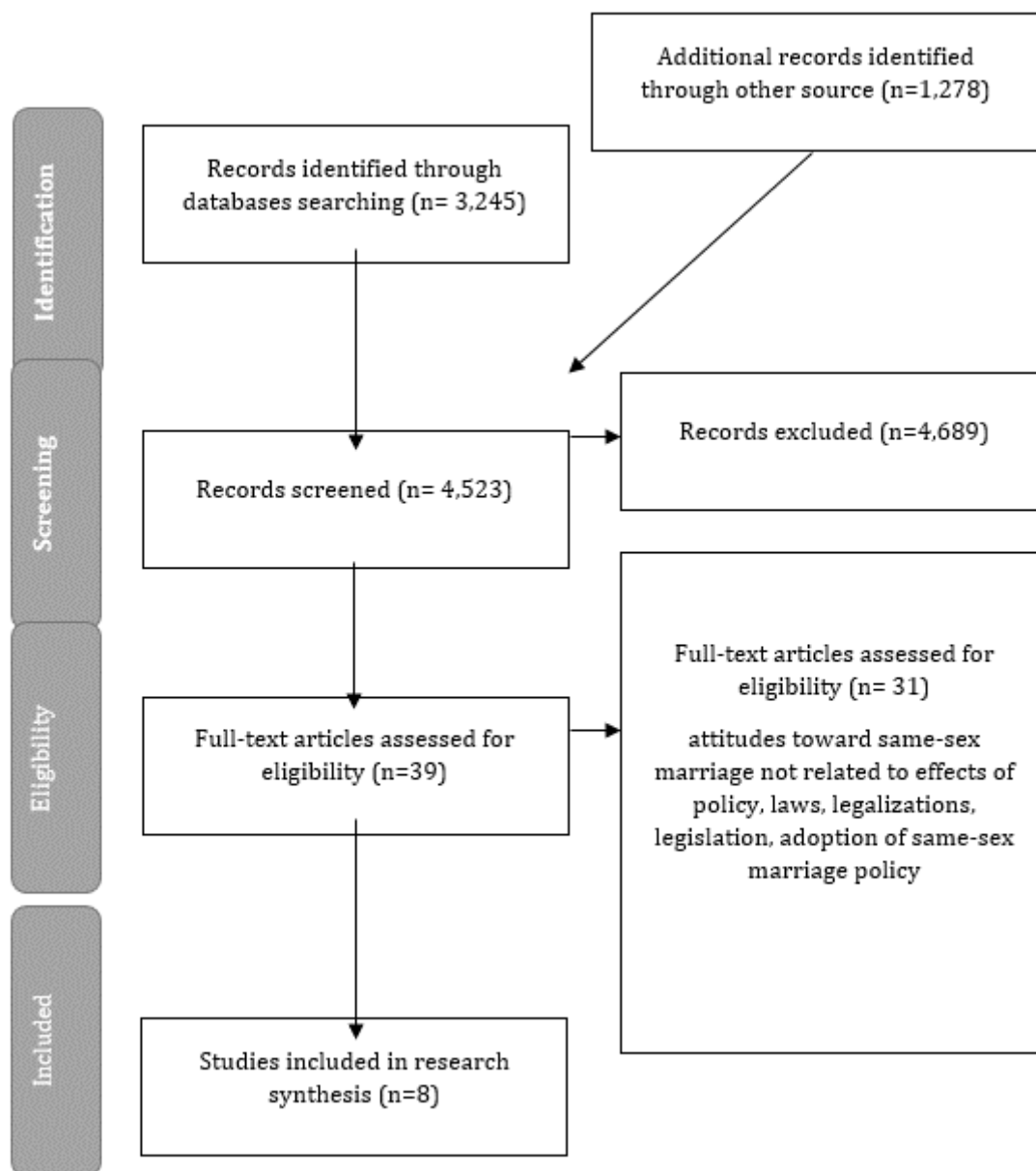


Figure 1. Depicting the Details of Literature Search  
Source: Processed by Authors (2022)

These tools were a data extraction form and an article analysis tool. The data extraction form analyzed the characteristics of those eligible research articles, which was adapted from a scoping review (Drabble, et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the article analysis tool which was adapted from the framework for conducting and writing a synthetic literature review (Schirmer, 2018) was employed to synthesize the full-text research articles based on the topics of interest.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

#### *Characteristics of the Qualified Research Articles*

In this section, the results were obtained from the data extraction form. For research design, all eight research articles used the quantitative method research to explore the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on attitudes toward LGBT people. In terms of theory/model/conceptual or research framework, those eligible research articles varied. However, it was apparent that there were four research articles that reported the application of difference-in-difference framework. One research article was found to utilize the number of models for its studies. Three articles were reported to be conducted in Europe and USA with a combined total of six research articles, and the rest were carried out with the-around-the-world setting.

In terms of analytical method, difference-in-difference method was a tool that had been employed in four research articles, followed by regression analysis (3 research articles), latent transition analysis (1 research article), and cluster analysis (1 research article), respectively. Cross-sectional data were the most used data set, accompanied by longitudinal time series data (1 research articles), longitudinal cross-section data (1 article), pooled time-series cross-section data (1 article), and panel data (1 article). The European Social Survey (ESS) was the most-extracted data source for those research articles, followed by the American National Election Study (ANES), the World Values Survey (WVS), the Gallup World Poll, the World Bank, the Issues Correlates of War, and the Project Implicit. Table 1 summarized the characteristics of eligible research articles in the data extraction form. The results of characteristics of the qualified research articles were shown in Table 1.

#### **What Are the Effects of the Same-Sex Marriage Policy, Legislation, and Law on the Social Attitudes Toward the LGBTQ People?**

Based on the empirical evidence from four research articles, the effects of the same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on the social attitudes toward the homosexuality could be obviously seen. After the adoption or implementation, a level of anti-gay bias significantly decreased in Europe (Hooghe & Meeus, 2013) as well as in the U.S (Flores & Barclay, 2016). In particular, the states in USA that had been introduced with the same-sex marriage laws, legislations, and policies could reduce anti-gay attitudes. Ofosu, Chambers, Chen, and Hehman (2019) confirmed that the anti-gay attitudes were in decline after the locally legalized same-sex marriage in the United States of America. At a

Table 1. Summarizing the Characteristics of Eligible Research Articles by the Data Extraction Form  
Source: Processed by Authors (2022)

| Characteristics of Eligible Research Articles |                                                                    | Count (%) |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Research design                               | Quantitative method research                                       | 8 (100)   |
| Theory/model/conceptual or research framework | Multilevel model                                                   | 2 (14.29) |
|                                               | Fixed and random effect model                                      | 1 (7.14)  |
|                                               | Societal growth curve models                                       | 1 (7.14)  |
|                                               | Diffusion theory                                                   | 1 (7.14)  |
|                                               | Backlash model/consensus model/legitimacy model/polarization model | 1 (7.14)  |
|                                               | Difference-in-difference framework                                 | 4 (28.57) |
|                                               | Hypotheses                                                         | 3 (21.43) |
|                                               | Linear regression-discontinuity models                             | 1 (7.14)  |
|                                               | Europe                                                             | 3 (37.50) |
|                                               | USA                                                                | 3 (37.50) |
| Location                                      | Around the world                                                   | 2 (25)    |
| Analytical method                             | Regression analysis                                                | 3 (33.33) |
|                                               | Latent Transition Analysis                                         | 1 (11.11) |
|                                               | Difference-in-difference method                                    | 4 (44.44) |
|                                               | Cluster analysis                                                   | 1 (11.11) |
| Type of data                                  | Pooled time-series cross-section data                              | 1 (16.67) |
|                                               | Panel data                                                         | 1 (16.67) |
|                                               | Longitudinal time series data                                      | 1 (16.67) |
|                                               | Longitudinal cross-section data                                    | 1 (16.67) |
|                                               | Cross sectional panel data                                         | 2 (33.33) |
| Data source                                   | The European Social Survey (ESS)                                   | 3 (30)    |
|                                               | The American National Election Study                               | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | The World Values Survey (WVS)                                      | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | Carroll and Mendos (2017)                                          | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | The Gallup World Poll                                              | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | The World Bank                                                     | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | The Issues Correlates of War                                       | 1 (10)    |
|                                               | The Project Implicit                                               | 1 (10)    |

global level, same-sex marriage legislation would have effects only on those who had already established their support for the LGBTQ people (Redman, 2018). Hooghe and Meeus (2013) studied whether same-sex marriage legislation was associated with the attitudes toward homosexuality. This empirical study was conducted within the European countries except Romania, Iceland, Latvia, Turkey, and Israel. The results

revealed that in the European countries with same-sex marriage recognition, the levels of prejudice were significantly decreased whereas the countries with certain form of registered partnership for homosexual couples showed little decrease of prejudice. Based on the empirical results, same-sex marriage legislation could influence the attitudes of European people toward LGBTQ people.

Flores and Barclay (2016) examined the effects of same-sex marriage policy on mass attitudes after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the case in favor of LGBTQ people. Backlash Model, Legitimacy Model, Polarization Model, Consensus Model were applied to study those effects. The findings indicated that in the states where same-sex marriage policy had been introduced, the attitudes toward the homosexuality decreased significantly. Based on the findings, same-sex marriage policy could have effects on people's attitude toward the LGBT people. Redman (2018) explored the effects of same-sex legislation on the attitude toward the homosexual people. The associations between same-sex couple legislation and public opinion was under an investigation. There were four hypotheses to test such associations. This study contained representative sample of almost 100 countries around the world. The findings demonstrated that same-sex marriage legislation would influence those who have already shown their supports for homosexuality. Based on the findings, people who had already established positive attitudes toward LGBTQ people could be influenced by the same-sex marriage legislation.

Ofosu, Chambers, Chen, and Hehman (2019) studied the association between the same-sex marriage legalization and the implicit and explicit antigay bias. The study would test whether the locally legalized same-sex marriage was related to the change in people's implicit and explicit attitude. It was carried out in the U.S setting. It was found that after the passing of the government legislation, states with same-sex marriage legalization reduced antigay bias while those with never legalizing same-sex marriage showed the growing antigay bias. Therefore, the legalization of same-sex marriage could decrease the bias of people toward homosexuality in the places where legislation was made. Table 2 showed an example of synthesis method by the article analysis tool employed in this synthetic review.

#### Does Same-Sex Marriage Policy, Legislation, or Law Improve the Attitudes Toward LGBTQ People?

Four research articles focused on investigating whether same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and policy could improve or shape the positive attitudes toward the homosexual people. Both same-sex marriage policy and law could improve or shape the people's attitudes toward the LGBTQ people (Aksoy, Carpenter, Haas, & Tran, 2018; Kenny & Patel, 2017). Law could be used to change social attitudes toward the anti-LGBTQ bias at the community level (Kenny & Patel, 2017). In particular, the legal institutions may not change people's attitudes toward the anti-LGBTQ bias but established a new perception of social norm of same-sex marriage (Tankard & Paluck, 2017). Nonetheless, only law or legislation alone could not alter the attitudes of all populations toward the anti-LGBTQ bias. It could affect individuals who were non-conservative with higher education and liberty (Sani & Quaranta, 2022).

Table 2. Showing an Example of Synthesis Method by the Article Analysis Tool  
Employed in This Synthetic Review  
Source: Processed by Authors (2022)

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Citation</b>         | <b>Flores, A. R., &amp; Barclay, S. (2016). Backlash, Consensus, Legitimacy, or Polarization: The Effect Same-Sex Marriage Policy on Mass Attitudes. Political Research Quarterly, 69(1), 43-56.</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Rationale</b>        | <b>Purpose</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       | Hypothesis 1: Focusing on events such as judicial decisions and legal action on same-sex marriage should be lower approval of same-sex marriage and acceptance of lesbian and gay people.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                         | <b>Research Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                            | Hypothesis 2: Focusing on events such as judicial decisions and legal actions on same-sex marriage should increase approval of same-sex marriage and acceptance of lesbian and gay people.<br>Hypothesis 3: Focusing on events such as judicial decisions and legal actions on same-sex marriage should both increase and decrease approval of same-sex marriage and acceptance of lesbian and gay people.<br>Hypothesis 4: Focusing on events such as judicial decisions and legal actions on same-sex marriage should have no effect approval of same-sex marriage and acceptance of lesbian and gay people. |
|                         | <b>Design</b>                                                                                                                                                                                        | Quantitative method research                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                         | <b>Theoretical/Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses</b>                                                                                                                                               | Backlash model, Legitimacy model, Polarization model, Consensus model.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                         | <b>Participants, Setting, Type of data</b>                                                                                                                                                           | Data: The American National Election Study (ANES) Time Series from 2012 and a re-contact study in 2015                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Analysis Results</b> | Latent Transition Analysis<br>The states with the introduction of same-sex marriage policy showed the most reduced anti-gay attitudes.                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Kenny and Patel (2017) examined the association between the reform of laws and social norms toward homosexual people. At the community level, laws could function as a tool to improve the way people viewed gays and lesbians. Moreover, the countries previously colonized by the British empire showed poorer laws for the homosexuality.

Legal reform could influence the people's attitude toward LGBT bias in the society. Tankard and Paluck (2017) investigated the effect of a decision made by a Supreme Court concerned with same-sex marriage on the shift in perceived norms and individual attitudes.

The results demonstrated that the decision made by the institutions such as the Supreme Court could lead to the shifts in perceived social norms of the population even if personal attitudes remained unchanged. From this study, the Supreme Court could exert its influence on changing perceived social norms of the general people in the society; nevertheless, their attitude toward homosexual bias would possibly stay the same. Aksoy, Carpenter, Haas, and Tran (2018) investigated whether laws could shape people's attitude. The study would test the association between legal same-sex relationship recognition policies and attitude toward the homosexuality in Europe. Difference-in-differences framework was applied. Regression and difference-in-difference methods were utilized to perform the analysis of data from the European Social Surveys collected during 2002-2006. The results showed that there existed the association between legal same-sex relationship recognition policies and attitude toward the homosexuality after the policies had been adopted. The policies helped modify the attitudes toward same-sex couples. Based on these results, the same-sex relationship recognition policies could improve people's attitude toward LGBT bias in Europe.

Sani and Quaranta (2022) mapped the shifts in the attitudes toward gays and lesbian in the European context. Diffusion theory was applied to investigate the evolving attitudes toward the homosexuality. Cluster analysis was carried out to analyze the data obtained from the European Social Survey from 27 European countries. It was found that positive attitude toward gays and lesbian could be found in those who had higher education and liberty and who were non-conservative. Although the law was regarded as a needed tool for changing people's attitude, it was not enough to diffuse positive attitudes toward lesbians and gays to all segments of the population. Thus, same-sex marriage laws, legislation, and policy could improve the attitudes toward LGBT bias in a certain segment, not all populations in European countries.

### Discussion

This research synthesized the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on the social attitudes toward the homosexuality in the perspective of public policy evaluation. Whether same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law could improve the attitudes toward LGBTQ people was also reviewed. Those 8 qualified research articles applied the commonly used conceptual frameworks of policy analysis and evaluation. Econometric analysis was a common quantitative analytical method that had been used in policy analysis. Fixed and random effects were the quantitative modelling that had been typically applied as policy analysis framework. When the diffusion theory was applied to examine the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on the social attitudes toward homosexual people, it was observed the results did not indicate that overall population would have similar attitudes. Only certain group of people who were educated, liberal, and religion-free could be positively affected by the adoption of

same-sex policy. Overall, the findings suggested that laws, legislations, and policies could positively affect the social attitudes toward the LGBTQ people. The countries with same-sex policy, legislation, and law showed better attitudes toward LGBTQ people. However, policy, legislation, and law could not alter the attitudes of the entire population toward LGBTQ people. As in the case of the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision that ruled same-sex couples had the rights to marry as heterosexual couples, legal institutions played an important role in communicating the shift in social norm. Even if people perceived that same-sex marriage was another shifted social norm, their attitudes did not change accordingly. In addition to attitude, perceived social norm was considered the development of policy research in the lens of public policy evaluation. It produced empirically different results from those that studied the relationships between same-sex legislation and social attitudes. With econometric models, same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law would be confirmed they were tools that could both influence and shape individual attitudes toward the homosexuality. Besides, the main locations of those inclusive research articles were conducted mainly in Europe and the United States because of the data availability from reliable sources. Also, these two continents have the largest number of countries and states that legalize same-sex marriage. Nonetheless, more studies on the effects of implementing same-sex marriage policy on social attitudes and social norms toward sexual minorities from developing countries in Asia are needed. As any other studies, this synthetic review had some limitations. Because only 8 research articles were inclusive for the synthesis, the generalization may not be made. In addition, those empirical studies (six out of eight eligible research articles) were conducted mainly in the U.S. and European contexts. This synthetic review emphasized only the English-written research articles; as a result, no empirical evidence from other continents whose English was not their first language were synthesized. Those findings represented an ongoing situation of implementing the same-sex marriage policy and the attitudes toward LGBTQ people in the developed countries.

#### Recommendation for Future Research

Directions for future research are as the following. Apart from attitudes and public opinions, social norm would be another key variable incorporated in a model to investigate the effects of implementing same-sex marriage policy toward the homosexuality. Government authorities and institutions can exert their influence in changing the population's attitude toward LGBT people. In the countries where a Supreme Court or the Highest Court is involved in ruling on the rights of same-sex couples to marry, the association between legal institutions and the attitudes toward LGBT people should be examined. Social norm is included in this regard. Moreover, the implementation of same-sex marriage policy, social norm, and attitudes toward sexual minorities should be studied with the cause-and-effect relationship and social norm serves as mediating variable. Theoretically, social norm influences attitude and behavior. To increase English-written research articles and derive more empirical evidence from legalized same-sex marriage countries other than the United States and Europe, questionnaire can be used to learn the population's attitude and social norm toward the

adoption and implementation of same-sex marriage policy. Mixed-methods research is highly recommended to explore the effects of implementing same-sex marriage policy on the attitudes and social norm toward LGBTQ people. In-depth interviews would demonstrate why different segments of population agree or disagree with the same-sex marriage law.

### **Conclusion**

This research was aimed at identifying the research articles in relation to the implementation of same-sex marriage policy and attitudes toward the homosexuality published since 2000 onwards. More specifically, it reviewed and synthesized the research articles that studied the impacts of implementing same-sex marriage policy on social attitudes toward LGBTQ people within the scope of public policy evaluation. Synthetic review approach was utilized to conduct this study. Empirical results showed that the implementation of same-sex marriage policy was associated with the positive attitude toward sexual minorities where same-sex marriage law had been introduced. It was apparent that investigations of the effects of same-sex marriage policy, legislation, and law on the social attitudes toward LGBTQ people were limited. Only 8 research articles that examined the effects of same-sex marriage policy on social attitude toward the homosexuality were inclusive for synthetic reviews.

### **Acknowledgement**

The corresponding author thanks the co-authors; without the contribution from the co-authors, this synthetic review would not have been accomplished. Their efforts were acknowledged.

### **References**

- Anderson, J. E. (1976). Public policy: its formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation. *Public Administration Review*, 36 (6), 699-703.
- Badgett, L. M. (2011). Social inclusion and the value of marriage equality in Massachusetts and the Netherlands. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67(2), 316-334.
- Brown, J. E. (2016). Human rights, gay rights, or both? international human rights law and same-sex marriage. *Florida Journal of International Law*, 28(217), 218-239.
- Carpenter, C., Eppink, S. T., Jr., G. G., & McKay, T. (2021). Effects of access to legal same-sex marriage on marriage and health. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 40(2), 376-411.
- Chamie, J., & Mirkin, B. (2011). Same-sex marriage: a new social phenomenon. *Population and Development Review*, 37(3), 529-551.
- Chang, D. T. (2020). Legalisation of same-sex marriage in contemporary Taiwan. *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*, 3(2), 268-291.
- Chen, S., & Ours, J. C. (2020). Symbolism matters: the effect of same-sex marriage legalization on partnership stability. *Journal of Economic Behavior and*

*Organization*, 178, 44-58.

- D'Amore, S., Wollast, R., Green, R.-J., Bouchat, P., Costa, P. A., Katuzny, K., & Klein, O. (2020). Heterosexual university students' attitudes toward same-sex couples and parents across seven European Countries. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 1-14.
- Daniels, S. R. (2019). The evolution of attitudes on same-sex marriage in the United States, 1988-2014. *Social Science Quarterly*, 100(5), 1651-1663.
- Donà, A. (2021). Somewhere over the rainbow: Italy and the regulation of same-sex unions. *Modern Italy*, 26(3), 261-274.
- Drabble, L. A., Wootton, A. R., Veldhuis, C. B., Riggle, E. D., Rostosky, S. S., Lannutti, P. J., & Hughes, T. L. (2021). Perceived psychological impacts of legalized same-sex marriage: a scoping review of sexual minority adults' experiences. *PLoS ONE*, 16(5), 1-22.
- Dreier, S. K., Long, J. D., & Winkler, S. J. (2020). African, religion, and tolerant? how religious diversity shapes attitudes toward sexual minorities in Africa. *Politics and Religion*, 13(2), 273-303.
- Ferris, T. (2015). Reflections on the public policy process in Ireland. *Administration*, 62(4), 87-106.
- Flores, A. R., & Barclay, S. (2016). Backlash, consensus, legitimacy, or polarization: the effect same-sex marriage policy on mass attitudes. *Political Research Quarterly*, 69(1), 43-56.
- Foblets, M.-C., & Alidadi, K. (2020). Between sovereignty and transnationalism: the European Union as an incomplete "Transnational Legal Space". In C. J. Greenhouse, & C. L. Davis, *Landscapes of Law: Practicing Sovereignty in Transnational Terrain* (pp. 231-232). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania.
- Gonzales, G. (2014). Same-sex marriage - a prescription for better health. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 370, 1370-1376.
- Herek, G. M. (2006). Legal recognition of same-sex relationships in the United States: a social science perspective. *American Psychologist*, 61, 607-621.
- Herek, G. M. (2010). Sexual orientation differences as deficits: science and stigma in the history of American psychology. *Perspective on Psychological Science*, 5(6), 693-699.
- Hooghe, M., & Meeus, C. (2013). Is same-sex marriage legislation related to attitudes toward homosexuality? *Sexual Research and Social Policy*, 10(4), 258-268.
- Huang, Y.-T. (2020). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) young adults' relational well-being before and after Taiwanese legalization of same-sex marriage: a qualitative study protocol. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 1-8.
- Janssen, D.-J., & Scheepers, P. (2019). How religiosity shapes rejection of homosexuality across the globe. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 66(14).
- Kennedy, H. R., & Dalla, R. L. (2020). "It may be legal, but it is not treated equally": marriage equality and wellbeing implications for same-sex couples. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*, 32(1), 67-98.
- Kenny, C., & Patel, D. (2017). Norms and reform: legalizing homosexuality improves

- attitudes. Center for Global Development, Working Paper 465, 1-18.
- Kertzner, R. (2009). Marital rights, mental health, and public policy. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 13(3), 187-193.
- Khan, A. R., & Rahman, M. (2017). The role of evaluation at the stages of policy formulation, implementation, and impact assessment. *Agathos: An International Review of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(14), 173-186.
- Knaani, A., & Laur, L. T. (2021). Differences in suicidal behavior in sexual and gender minority populations. *Journal of Men's Health*, 17(4), 1-8.
- Kuźelewska, E. (2019). Same-sex marriage - a happy end story? the effectiveness of referendum on same-sex marriage in Europe. *Białostockie Studia Prawnicze*, 24(1), 13-27.
- Lannutti, P. J., & Lachlan, K. A. (2007). Assessing attitude toward same-sex marriage: scale development and validation. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 53(4), 113-133.
- Lau, H., & Strohm, C. Q. (2011). The effects of legally recognizing same-sex unions on health and well-being. *Minnesota Journal of Law & Inequality*, 29(1), 107-148.
- Leblance, A. J., Frost, D. M., & Bowen, K. (2018). Legal marriage, unequal recognition, and mental health among same-sex couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80, 397-408.
- Lee, H.-Y., & Mutz, D. C. (2019). Changing attitudes toward same-sex marriage: a three-wave panel study. *Political Behavior*, 41, 701-722.
- McDonough, R. (2005). Is same-sex marriage an equal-right issue? *Public Affairs Quarterly*, 19(1), 51-63.
- Moskowitz, D. A., Rieger, G., & Roloff, M. E. (2010). Heterosexual attitudes toward same-sex marriage. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57(2), 325-336.
- Mule, N. J., Ross, L. E., Deeprase, B., Jackson, B. E., Daley, A., Travers, A., & Moore, D. (2009). Promoting LGBT health and wellbeing through inclusive policy development. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 8(18), 1-11.
- NeJaime, D. (2012). Marriage inequality: same-sex relationships, religious exceptions, and the production of sexual orientation discrimination. *California Law Review*, 100(5), 1169-1238.
- Oforu, E. K., Chambers, M. K., Chen, J. M., & Hehman, E. (2019). Same-sex marriage legalization associated with reduced implicit and explicit antigay bias. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(8), 1-6.
- Ogolsky, B. G., Monk, J. K., Rice, T. M., & Oswald, R. F. (2019). As the states turned: implications of the changing legal context of same-sex marriage on well-being. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 36(10), 3219-3238.
- Ohlander, J., Batalova, J., & Treas, J. (2005). Explaining educational differences on attitudes toward homosexual relations. *Social Science Research*, 34(4), 781-799.
- Pereira, H., & Monteiro, S. (2017). The role of political and legislative changes in the everyday lives of LGB individuals: the case of Portugal. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 14, 300-309.
- Patton, C. V., Sawicki, D. S., & Clark, J. J. (2016). Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and

- Planning. 3rd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Pew Research Center. (2019, October 28). Pewforum. Retrieved October 14, 2021, from <https://www.pewforum.org/fact-sheet/gay-marriage-around-the-world/>
- Rebecca J. Kreitzer, A. J., & Tolbert, C. J. (2014). Does policy adoption change opinions on minority rights? the effects of legalizing same-sex marriage. *Political Research Quarterly*, 67(4), 795-808.
- Redman, S. M. (2018). Effects of same-sex legislation on attitudes toward homosexuality. *Political Research Quarterly*, 7(3), 628-641.
- Riodan, P. (2014). The purpose of the law: the case of same-sex marriage. *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 103(409), 10-19.
- Roberts, L. M., & Marx, R. A. (2018). The persistence of policies of protection in LGBTQ research & advocacy. *Journal of LGBTQ Youth*, 15(4), 280-299.
- Sani, G. M., & Quaranta, M. (2022). Mapping changes in attitudes towards gays and lesbian in Europe: an application of diffusion theory. *European Sociological Review*, 38(1), 1-14.
- Schirmer, B. R. (2018). Framework for conducting and writing a synthetic literature review. *International Journal of Education*, 10(1), 94-105.
- Schwartz, J. (2010). Investigating differences in public support for gay rights issues. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57(6), 748-759.
- Sloane, J. L., & Robillard, L. M. (2018). Factors affecting heterosexual attitudes to same-sex marriage in Australia. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 15, 290-301.
- Takacs, J., Szalma, I., & Bartus, T. (2016). Social attitudes toward adoption by same-sex couples in Europe. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 45, 1787-1798.
- Tankard, M. E., & Paluck, E. L. (2017). The effect of a supreme court decision regarding gay marriage on social norms and personal attitudes. *Psychological Science*, 28(9), 1334-1344.
- Teo, C., Metheny, N., & Chum, A. (2021). Family support modifies the effect of changes to same-sex marriage legislation on LGB mental health: evidence from a UK cohort study. *European Journal of Public Health*, 1-6.
- Tomczak, L., Iwanski, R., & Zawadzka-Witt, K. (2021). Attitudes in Poland towards the legalization of same-sex partnerships in the context of Political Preferences. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 1-12.
- Webb, S. N., & Chonody, J. (2014). Heterosexual attitudes toward same-sex marriage: the influence of attitudes toward same-sex parenting. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 10(4), 404-421.
- Whitehead, A. L. (2014). Male and female "He" created them: gender traditionalism, masculine images of God, and attitudes toward same-sex unions. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 53(3), 479-496.