

CDS AFRICA

CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY & SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**PUBLIC SENTIMENTS TOWARDS
THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY AND RELATED
PRACTICES IN GHANA**



Survey Report
on
Public Sentiments Towards the LGBTQ+ Community and
Related Practices in Ghana

The debate in Ghana about LGBTQ+ and related practices is far from settled, notwithstanding the passage of the Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill 2021 (Anti-LGBTQ+). The discourse following the passage and the President's refusal to assent to the Bill has generated varied responses from Ghanaians and the international community.

The President, H.E. Akufo-Addo, has declined to assent to the Bill, citing a Supreme Court action brought by Mr. Richard Dela Sky, seeking an order from the Court to declare the Bill null, void and of no effect. Since this decision, the Presidency has come under intense socio-political and religious pressure to assent to the Bill.

In contrast to the domestic pressure to assent to the Bill, foreign missions in Ghana and transnational organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations strongly oppose its passage and the President's probable assent. The United Nations specifically called for the Bill not to become law.

Due to the impasse, CDS Africa commissioned a study to test whether Ghanaians are united in their opposition to the Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill of 2021. The study confirms the perception that Ghanaians are opposed to LGBTQ+ and related activities. About 78.2% of respondents support the passage of the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill.

The study measured the following, among others:

- a. Public opinion about LGBTQ+ activities in Ghana.
- b. The level of awareness about the Anti-gay bill.
- c. Assess whether or not Ghanaians support President Akufo-Addo's delay in approving the Bill.
- d. Impact on democracy and economic well-being if the Bill is enacted.

METHODOLOGY

Mixed-Method Design

There is a classic assumption that Ghanaians are opposed to LGBTQ+ and related activities given religio-cultural factors or values. We commissioned this research primarily to test the reliability of earlier studies and to inform our advocacy for tolerance, democracy, and human rights of citizens.

We used a mixed-method research design, which allowed us to explore the best of both worlds. The quantitative survey design generated data to test the blanket supposition that Ghanaians are roundly opposed to LGBTQ+ and related activities. We used a focus group qualitative design to explore the subject in-depth. This design choice has generated a wealth of qualitative data, which would serve as an explainer for the quantitative data and a window to peep into respondents' minds.

Sampling and Data Collection

The sample universe of this study includes all Ghanaians. We sampled one thousand two hundred and fifty (1250) respondents randomly in the sixteen regions for the survey research. Thirty-five (35) respondents were selected randomly to participate in two separate focus group discussions. Altogether, 1285 respondents were interviewed thereby exceeding the 1,250 thresholds giving us a 95 percent confidence interval.

As indicated above, we used a simple random sampling technique to select the respondents for the survey and focus group discussions. This sampling technique ensured that every member of the sample frame had an equal chance of being included in the study.

Data Collection

The study collected data in all sixteen regions. All enumerators were trained on ethical matters and questionnaire administration to minimize sampling, enumerator, and observer biases, among other things. The survey instrument was pretested on 100 respondents to address issues of reliability and validity.

DEMOGRAPHY OF THE STUDY

1. AGE

From the data analyzed, the results [See *fig. 1*] show that participants in the age bracket of 18-24 constituted the majority, 36.0% (n=450) of respondents, with those 60 years or above being the lowest age cohort of 1.8% (n=22).

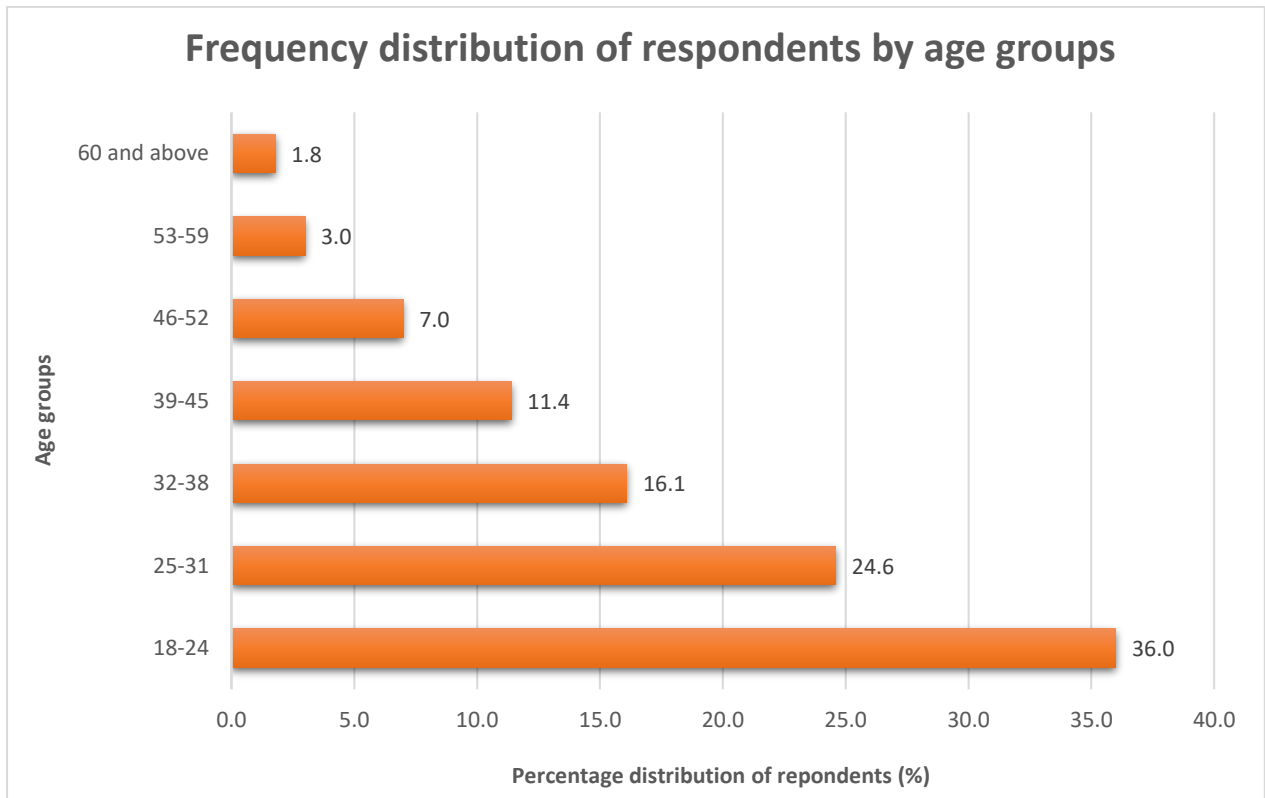


Figure 1.: Frequency (%) distribution of respondents by age groups

2. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SEX

Regarding the sex distribution of participants, 57.5% (n=719) of male respondents participated in the survey, as compared to 42.5% (n=531) the female respondents [Fig 2].

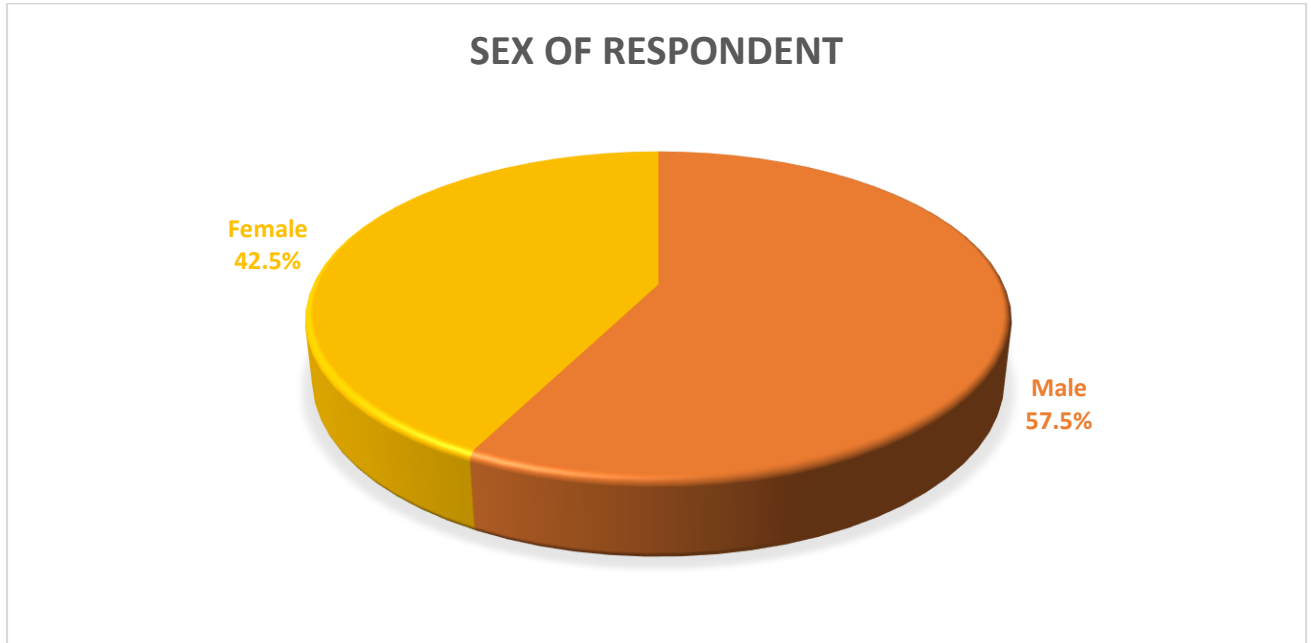


Figure 2: Percentage (%) distribution of respondents by sex

3. EDUCATION

With their educational attainment, the results [Fig. 3] show that the majority, 42.9% (n=536) of participants reported attaining an undergraduate level of education, with 3.5% (n=44) others indicating no attainment of formal education.

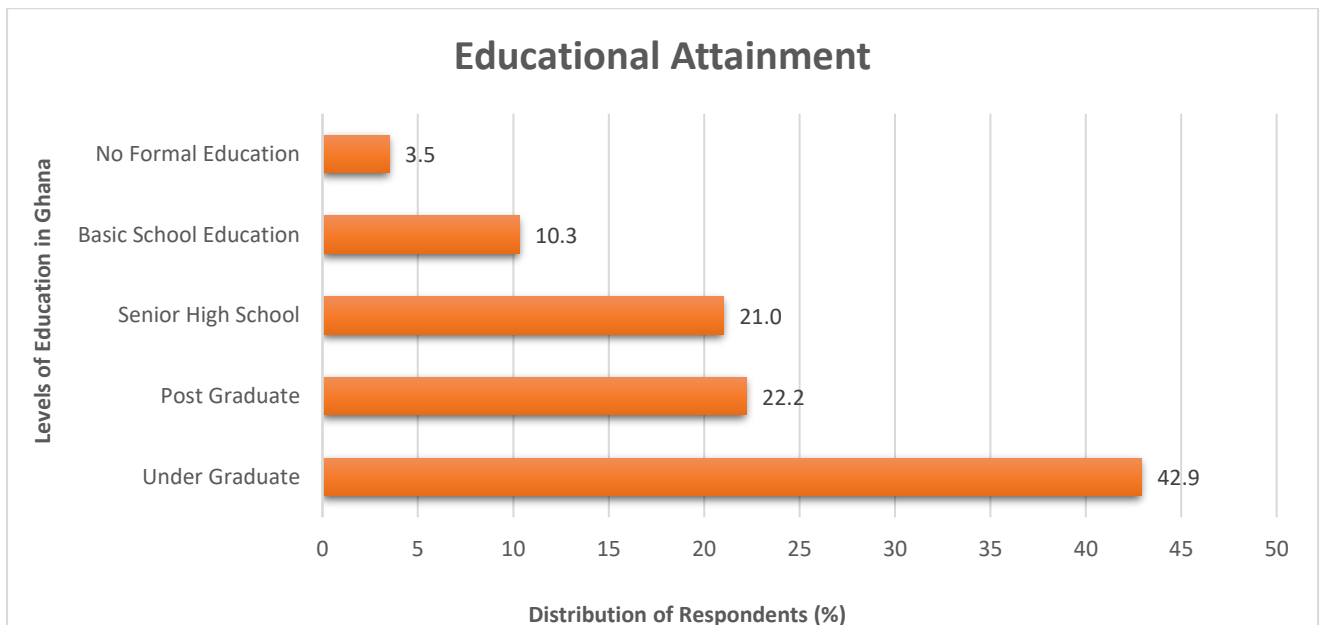


Figure 4: Percentage distribution of respondents by educational attainment

4. RELIGION

On religious affiliation, some 50.2% (n=626) of respondents, constituting the majority are Christians according to the data gathered as evident in *Fig.4*.

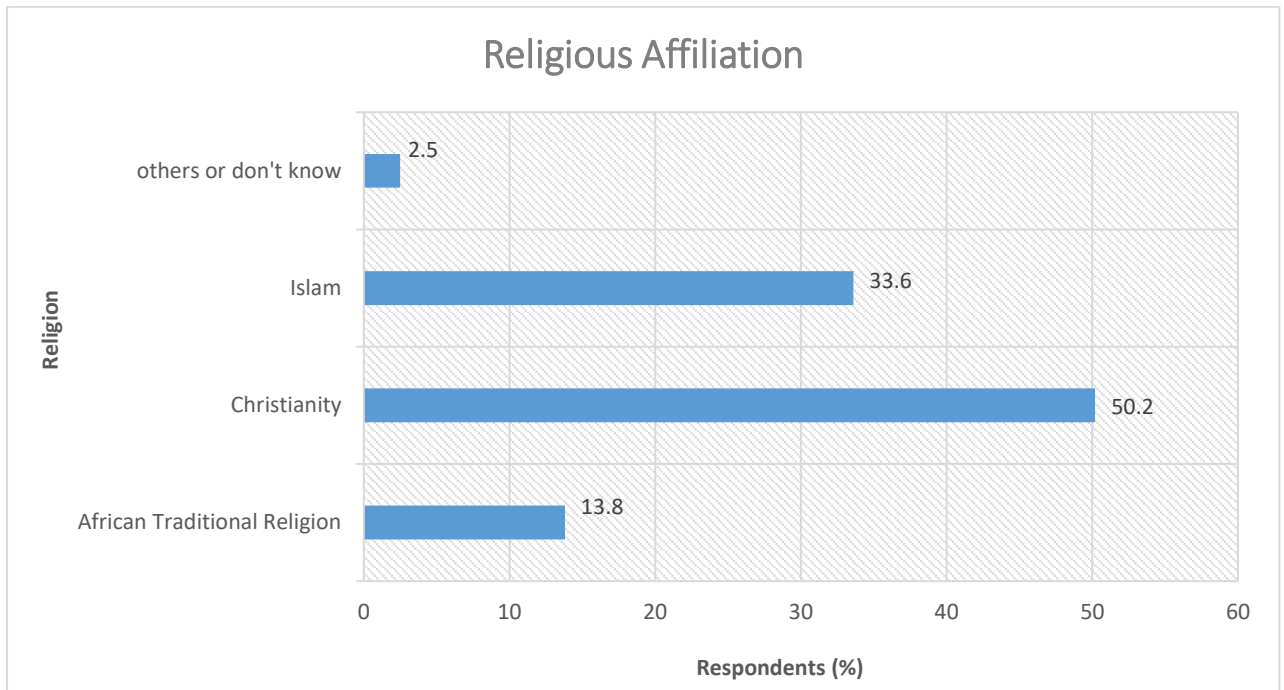


Figure 4: proportional (%) presentation of respondents per their religious affiliations

5. MARITAL STATUS

For marital status, the majority, 51.6% (n=645) of respondents indicated they have never been married, while 4.0% (n=50) were either divorced or separated [See *Fig.5*].

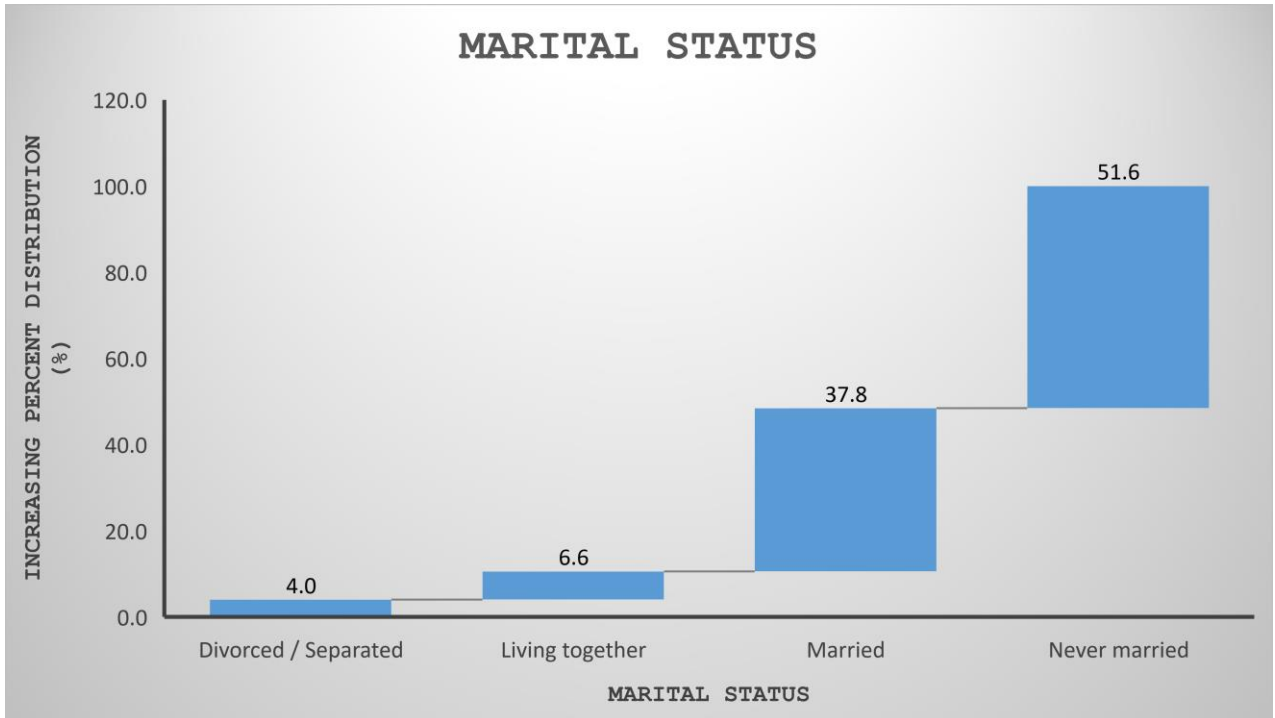


Figure 5: Increasing/cumulative percentage (%) distribution of respondents by marital status

6. POLITICAL AFFILIATION

When asked about their political affiliation, the illustration in *Fig. 6* indicates that over half (55.0%; n=687) of participants were non-partisan and without a specific party affiliation.

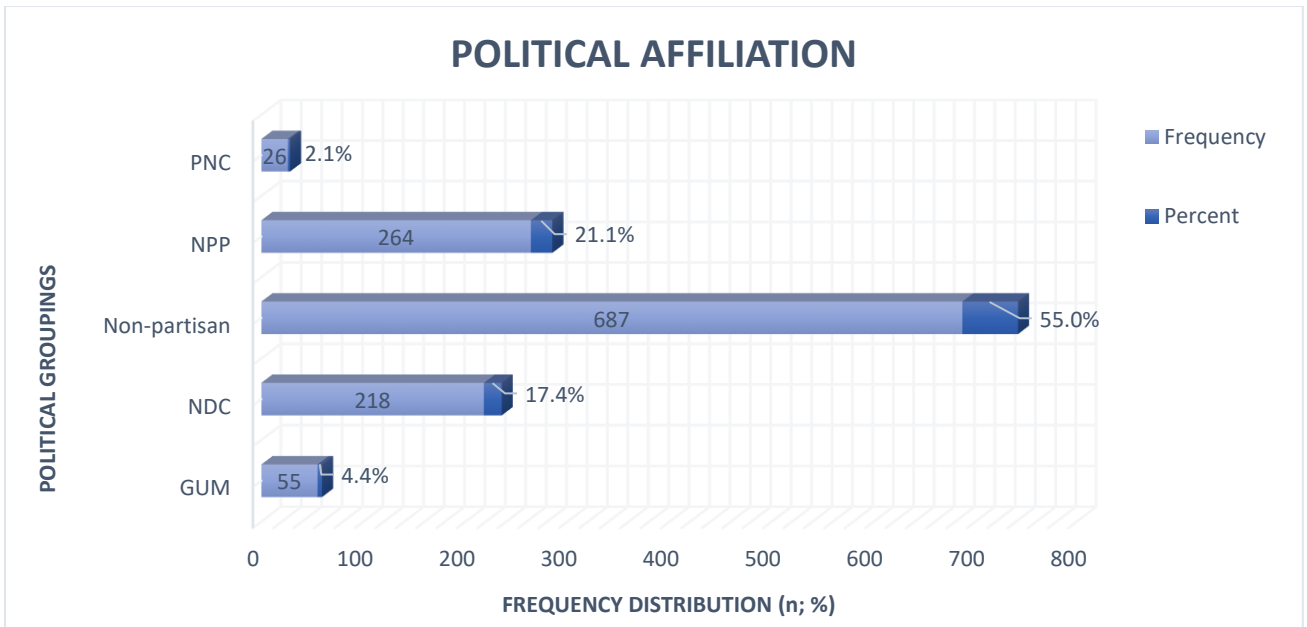


Figure 6: Frequency distribution of respondents by political affiliation (Count, n; Per cent, %)

7. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Table 1 is the regional distribution of respondents, showing the Greater Accra region as the region with the highest representation of participants of 29.4% (n=367). Ashanti, Central, and Eastern contributed slightly over a tenth each, of the total respondents respectively.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by region of origin
REGION OF ORIGIN

| | Frequency (n) | Percent (%) |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Ahafo Region | 28 | 2.2 |
| Ashanti | 144 | 11.5 |
| Bono East Region | 17 | 1.4 |
| Bono Region | 32 | 2.6 |
| Central Region | 151 | 12.1 |
| Eastern | 193 | 15.4 |
| Greater Accra | 367 | 29.4 |
| North East | 44 | 3.5 |
| Northern | 45 | 3.6 |
| Oti Region | 11 | 0.9 |
| Savannah | 6 | 0.5 |
| Upper East | 30 | 2.4 |
| Upper West | 25 | 2.0 |
| Volta Region | 110 | 8.8 |
| Western North | 8 | 0.6 |
| Western Region | 39 | 3.1 |
| Total | 1250 | 100.0 |

8. When asked if they knew anyone practicing LGBTQ+, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents (77.7%; n=971) reported no knowledge of anyone practicing LGBTQ+ and related activities [Fig.8].

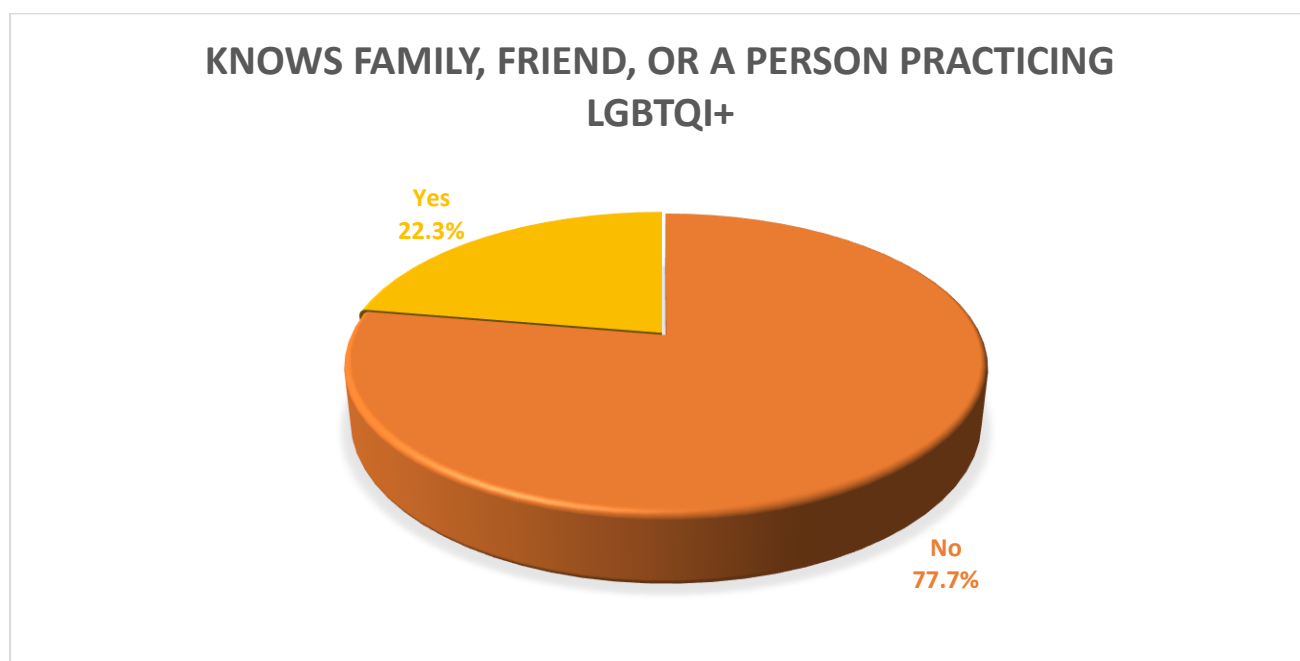


Figure 8: Distribution by Yes/No, on whether respondent knows any person practicing LGBTQ+

9. According to the data per results in Fig.9, about half of respondents (49.5%; n=619) are indifferent about the treatment of known LGBTQ+ persons in the recently passed Bill.

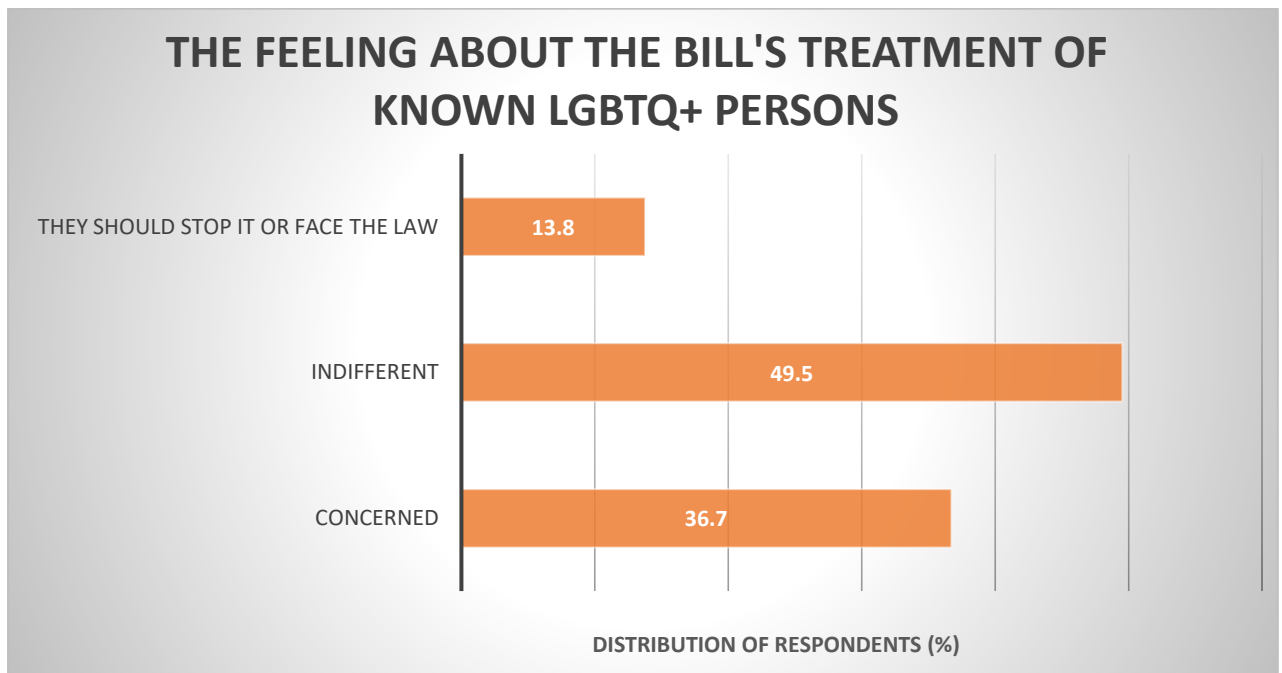


Figure 9: Distribution of Respondents per their feeling on how the “Anti-LGBTQ+” Bill will treat identified persons

10. From the illustration in Fig. 10, more than two-thirds (69.1%; n=864) of respondents do not agree with the idea of legalizing LGBTQ+ and its related activities in Ghana.

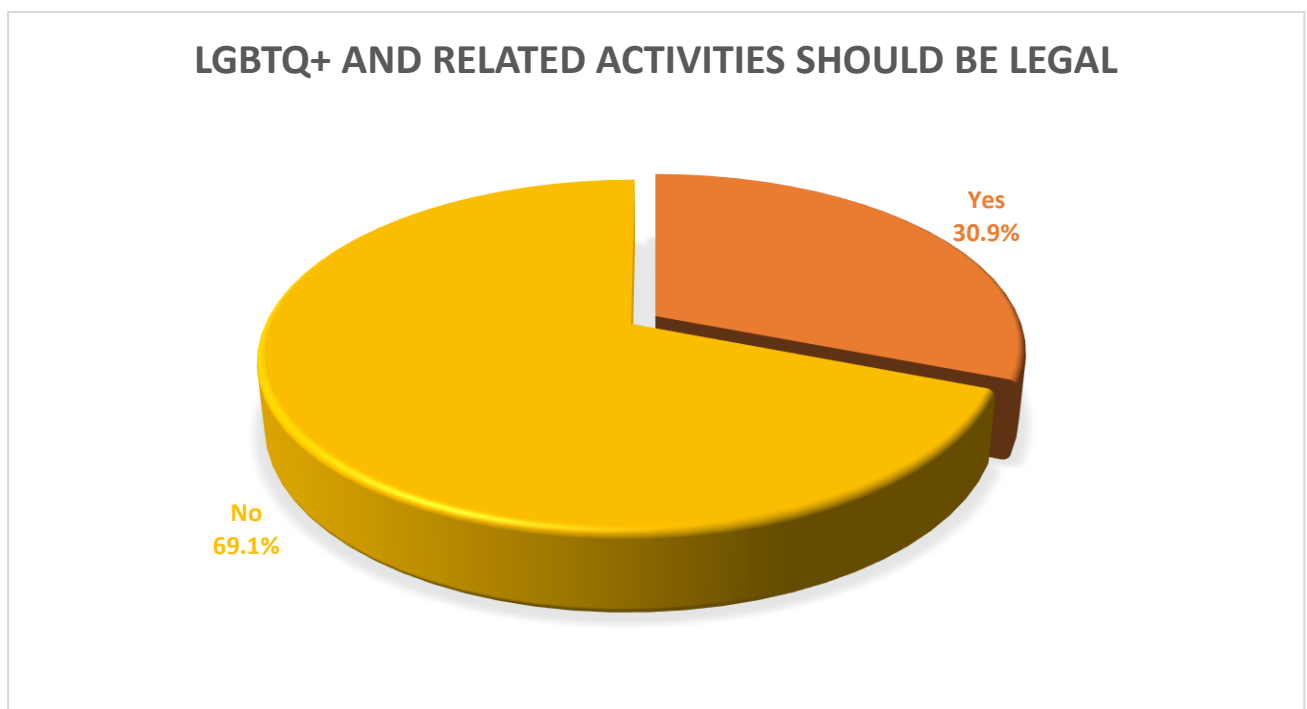


Figure 10: Distribution of (Yes/No) on whether LGBTQ+ and Related activities should be legal

11. From the data analysis, the results in Fig. 11 indicate that 76.5% (n=956) of respondents reported knowing about the passed Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill by the Parliament of Ghana.

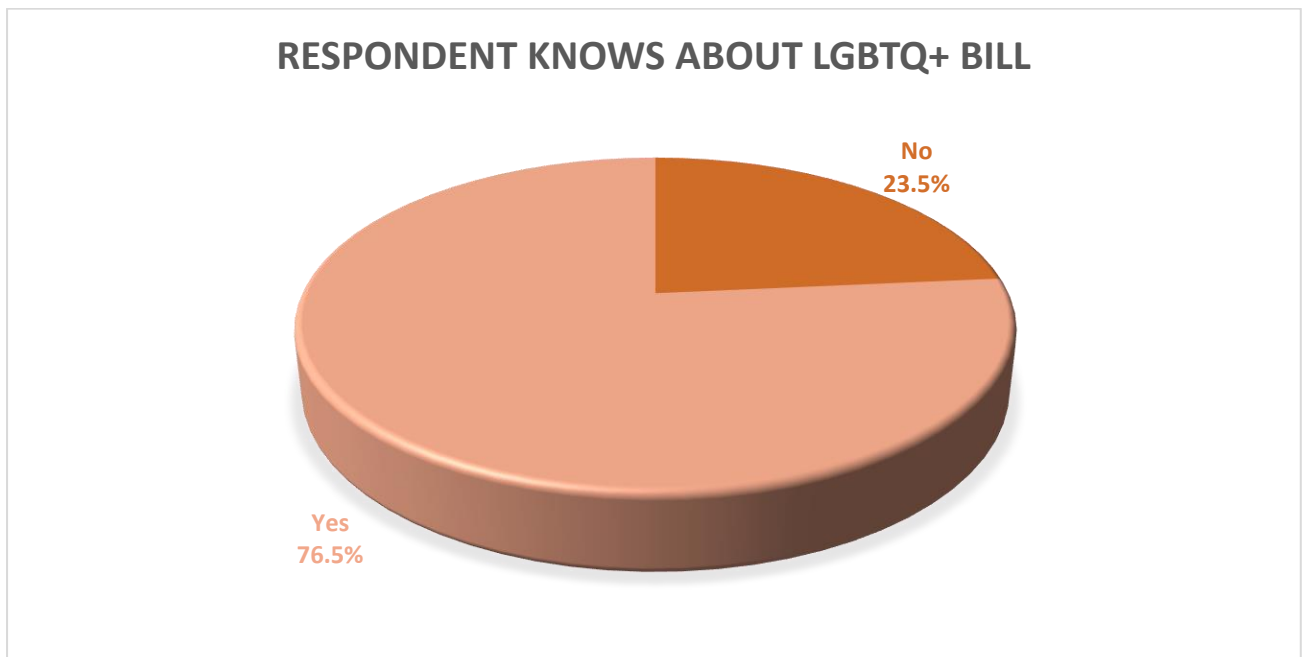


Figure 11: Presentation of (Yes/No) on if respondents know of the passed Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill

12. Relative to support for the Bill, the results indicate that 77.1% (n=964) of respondents agree with the passage of the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill by the Parliament of Ghana [See Fig. 12].

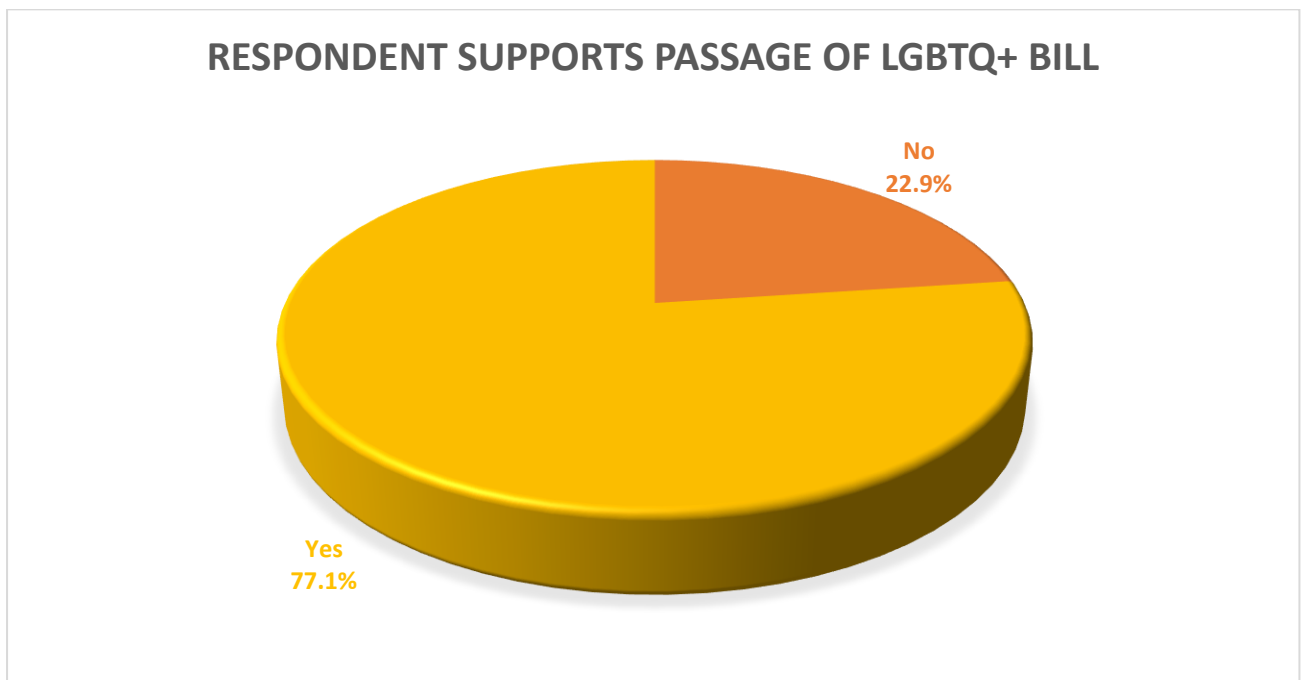


Figure 12: Distribution by (Yes/No) Support for passage of the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill by Parliament

13. To further test their support for the passage of the Bill, respondents were asked if they were against LGBTQ+ and related activities, and 80.9% (n=1011) answered "Yes" [See Fig. 13].

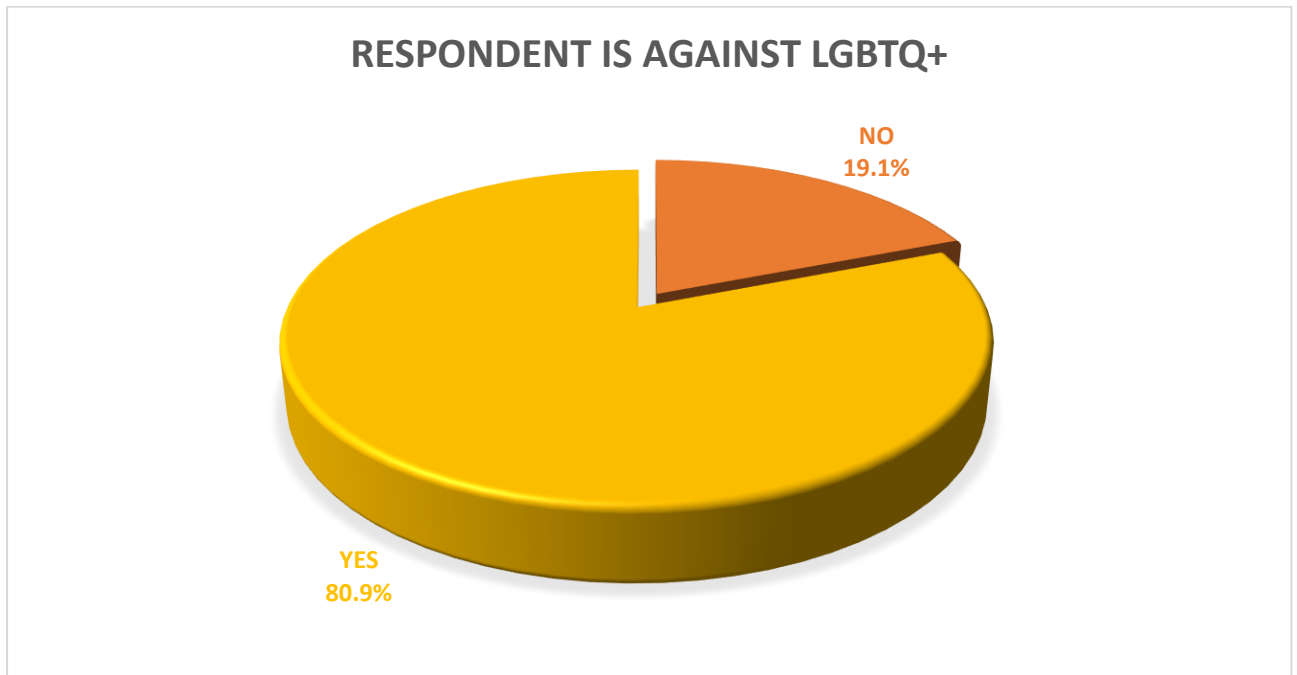


Figure 13: Presentation by (Yes/No) if the respondent is against LGBTQ+ and related activities

14. When the question was asked if LGBTQ+ and related activities be regulated by the government, 54.7% (n=684) felt there was no need for that, as contained in Fig. 14.

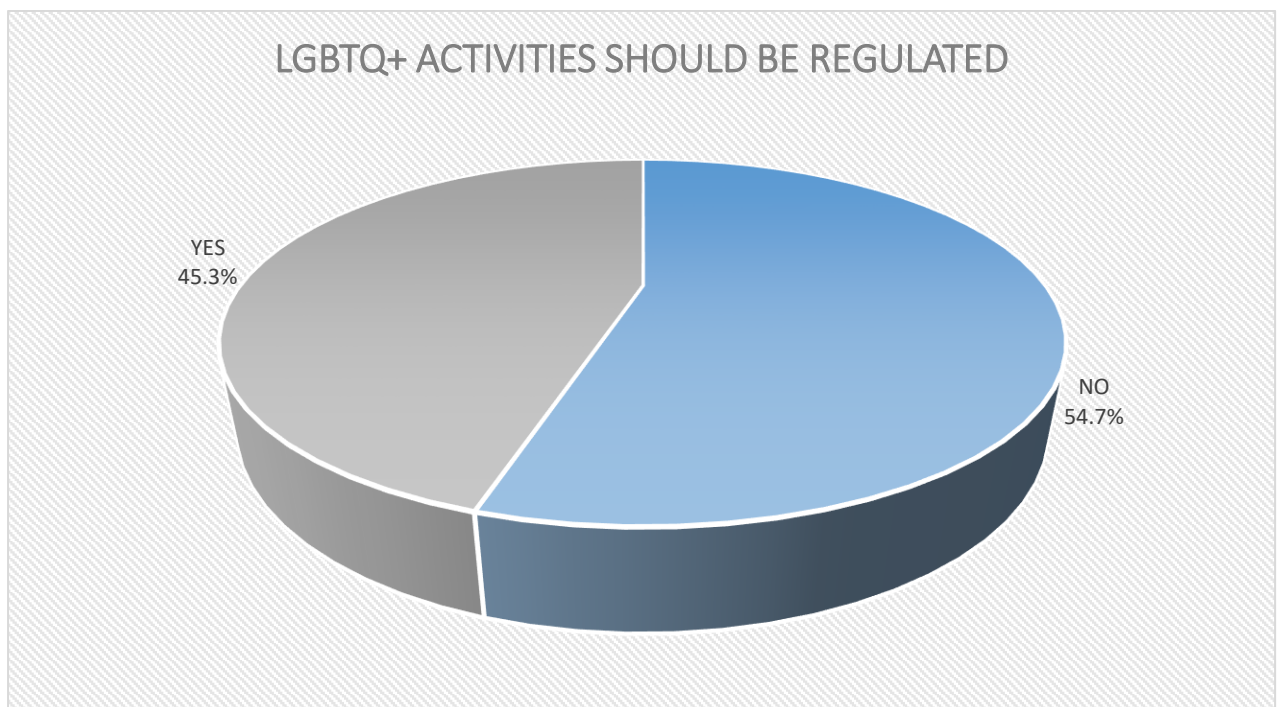


Figure 14: Distribution of respondents on if the government should regulate LGBTQ+ (Yes/No)

15. When asked about employment, more than two-thirds (67.2%; n=840) of respondents indicated that they are employed as evident in Fig. 15.

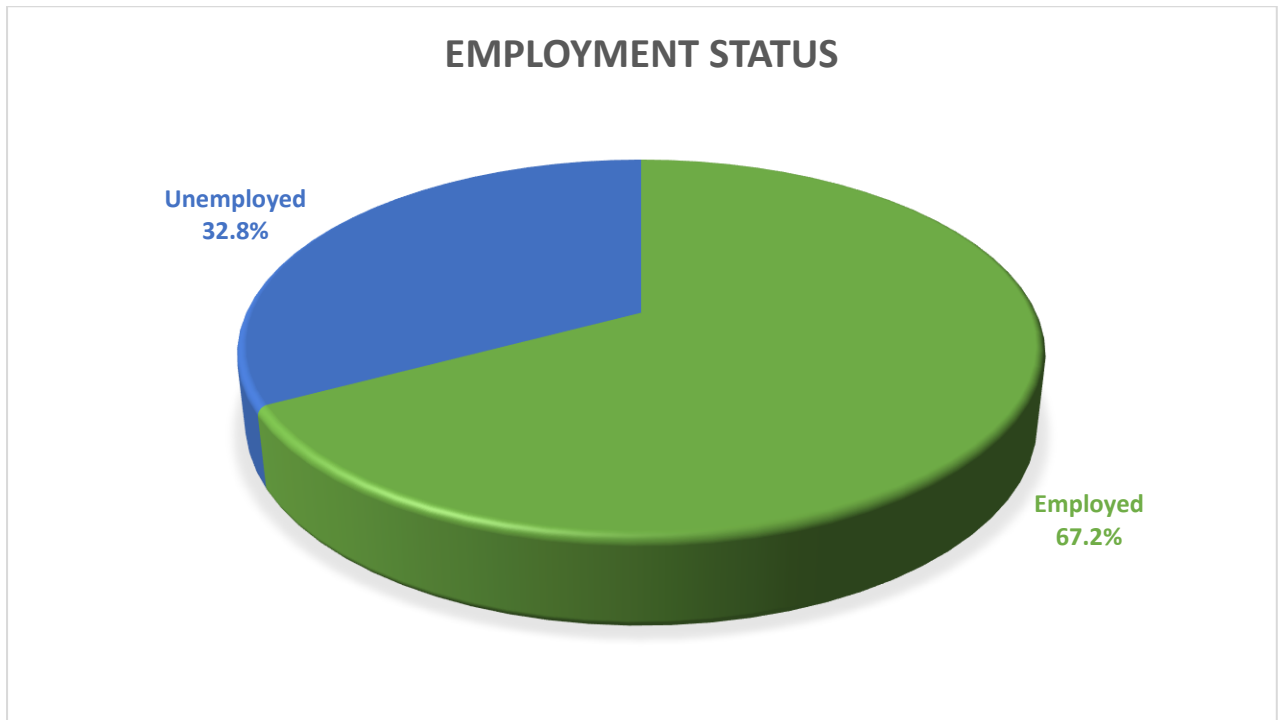


Figure 15: Percentage distribution of respondents by employment status

16. When asked if they were concerned about the threat of economic repercussions for Ghana if the Bill is signed into law, 55.8% (n=698) said "No" [See Fig. 16]

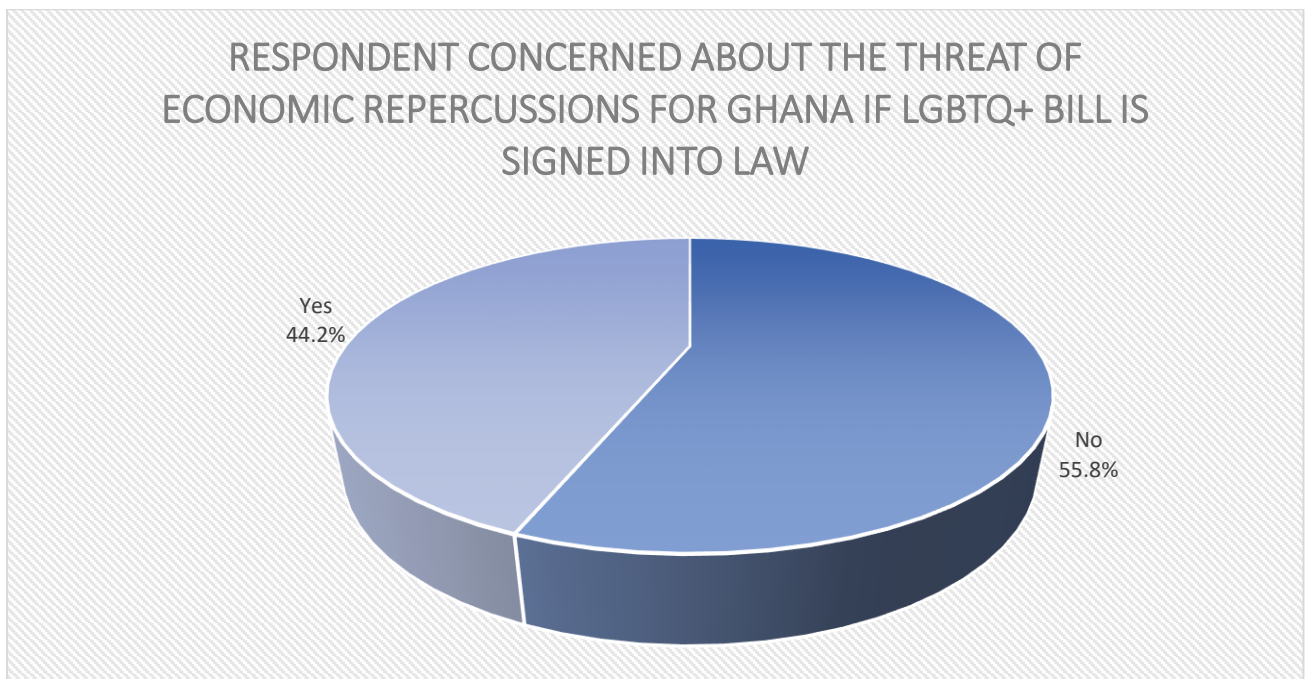


Figure 16: Respondents on concerns of economic repercussions if Bill is assented to (Yes/No)

17. From the results in Fig. 17, the majority (69.0%; n=862) of respondents reported that they agree with the president's decision to wait till the case is determined by the Supreme Court.

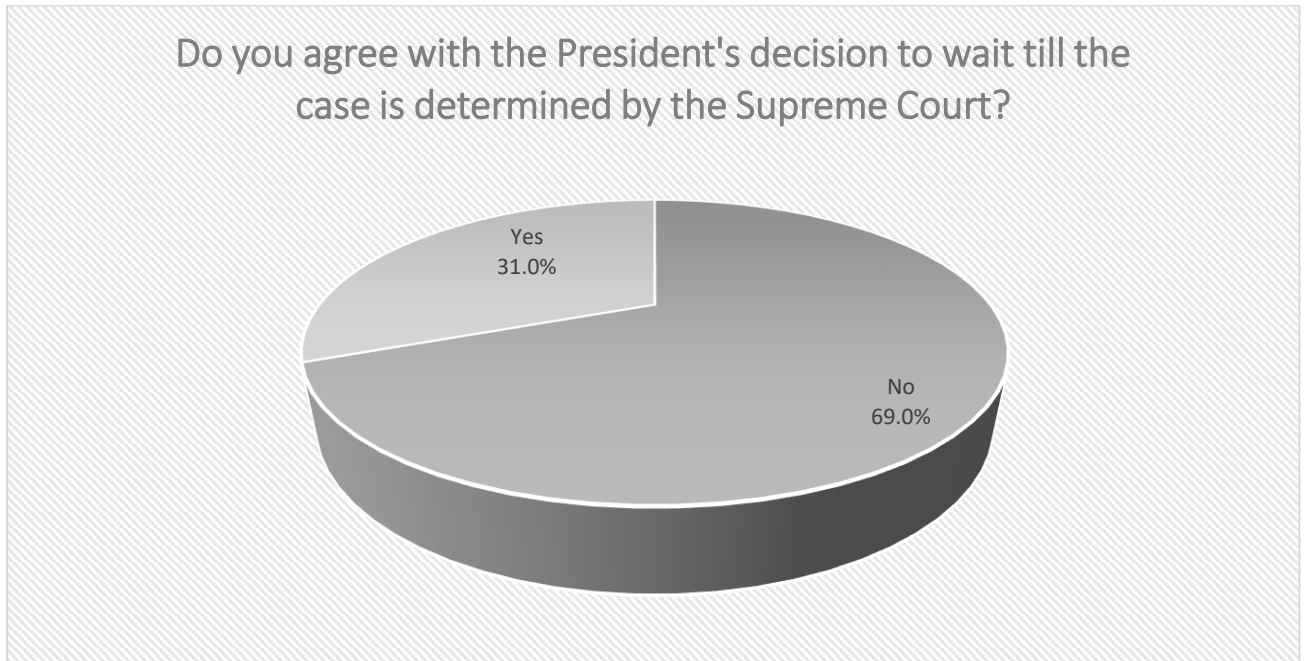


Figure 17: Distribution (Yes/No) of respondents agree with the president to wait for court case

18. Asked if the president should assent to the Bill despite a pending court case, 72.6% of the respondents said they wanted the president to go ahead and assent to the Bill [See Fig. 18].

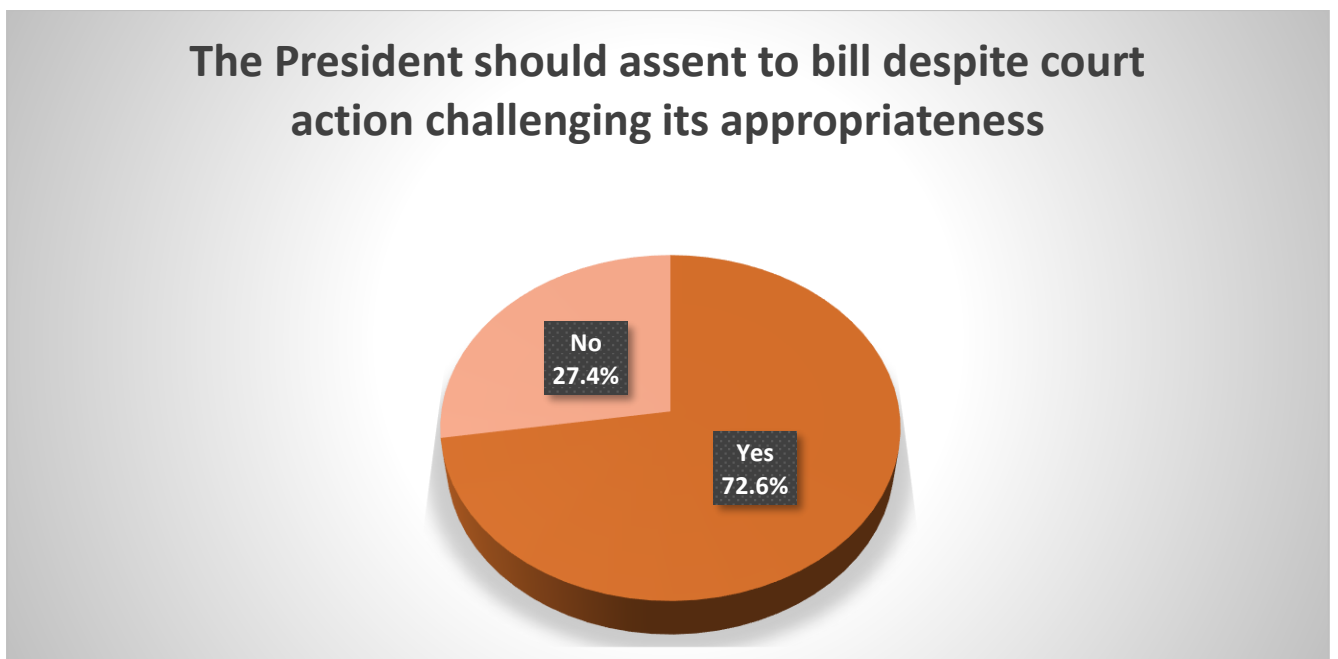


Figure 18: Distribution on if the president should assent to Bill despite Court case (Yes/No)

19. On the question of whether the President should assent to the Bill despite cautions from the international community of economic implications, 60.4% (n=755) answered in the affirmative, while about 4 out of 10 (n=495; 39.6%) disapproved of assenting to the Bill.

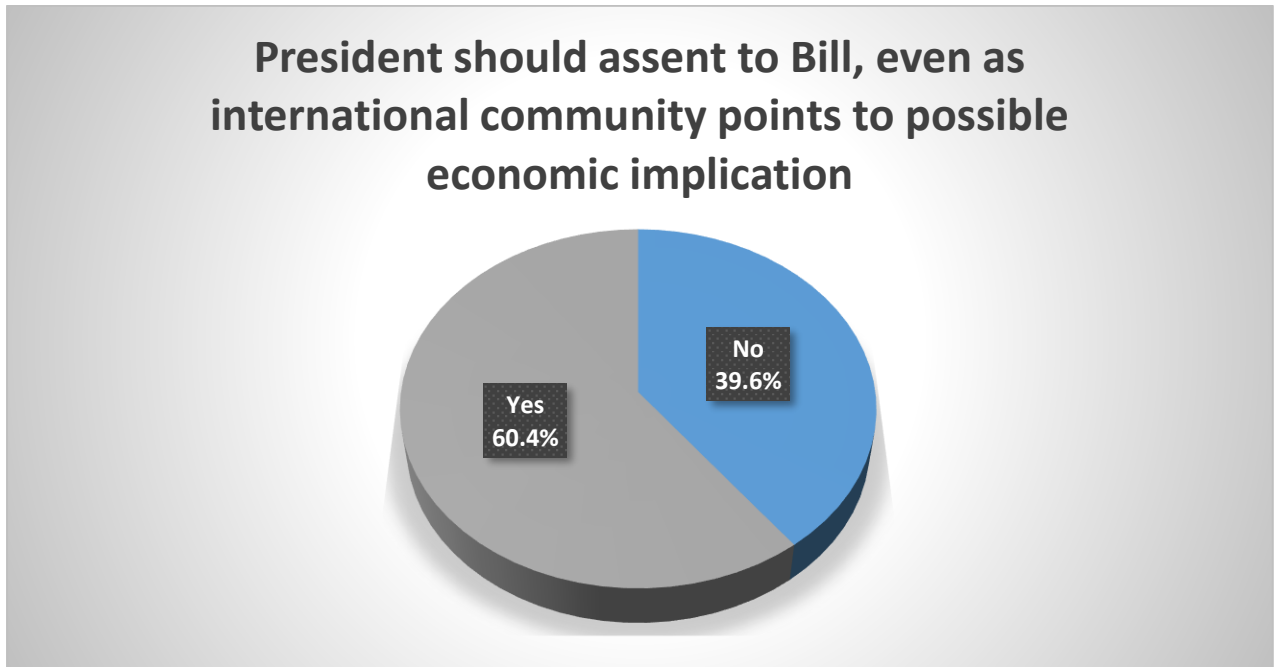


Figure 19: Percentage Distribution on if the president should assent to Bill (Yes/No)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We advocate for comprehensive education regarding the Anti LGBTQI+ Bill, as there exists significant misinformation among the public regarding its objectives. Many Ghanaians lack awareness of what the bill aims to accomplish. Therefore, we call upon stakeholders, including the government and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), to initiate educational awareness campaigns about the Bill.
- The excessively punitive nature of the Anti-gay bill should be taken into account, as it leans towards harshness rather than focusing on rehabilitation and reform. While a minority of the population under examination did not support the advancement of LGBTQI+ activities, they expressed opposition to the severe treatment of individuals within the community.
- Amendment or broader consultation is necessary to review the provisions of the bill to prevent a clash with existing laws of Ghana. This is particularly relevant given the ongoing legal challenge to contest the bill in court.
- Economic and political ramifications should not be ignored considering warnings from the international community about the bill.