

Navigating Pride: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities of LGBTQ+ Community Events in Promoting Inclusivity and Overcoming Societal Barriers

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Abstract:

Pride events have become powerful cultural and political platforms that celebrate the diversity, resilience, and achievements of the LGBTQ+ community. Originating from protest movements in the late twentieth century, particularly the Stonewall Riots of 1969, Pride has transformed from a form of resistance into a global celebration. Despite this evolution, Pride events continue to face a range of challenges that can undermine their inclusivity and effectiveness. These include political resistance, safety concerns, and the growing influence of commercial interests, which may dilute the events' original activist intentions.

This research explores the dual nature of Pride events as both celebratory and contested spaces. It investigates how these events can simultaneously foster visibility and unity while also grappling with internal and external tensions. Drawing on historical context, recent literature, and primary data, the study examines the experiences of organisers and participants, with a particular focus on marginalised subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community. It considers how Pride events contribute to social inclusion and advocacy, while also identifying the risks posed by commercialisation and insufficient attention to intersectionality.

The research is guided by four key questions: What are the main challenges faced by organisers and participants in achieving inclusivity and addressing societal barriers? How do Pride events enhance the visibility and equality of marginalised LGBTQ+ subgroups? In what ways does commercialisation affect the goals and outcomes of Pride events? What strategies can be implemented to improve safety and inclusivity for all participants?

Findings suggest that while Pride events offer significant opportunities for community building and public engagement, they must navigate complex dynamics to remain inclusive and impactful. The study highlights the importance of critically reflecting on event design, stakeholder involvement, and the balance between celebration and activism. It also underscores the need for more inclusive planning processes that prioritise the voices of underrepresented groups within the LGBTQ+ spectrum.