

PERCEPTION ON CIVIL UNIONS: SUPPORTING A MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY

ABSTRACT

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The Civil Union Act enables any two individuals, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, to enter into a legally recognized partnership. Marginalized communities, especially those identifying as LGBTQ+, continue to face discrimination and exclusion across various dimensions, including economic, political, social, and cultural spheres. As noted by Duffy (2020), civil unions offer vital legal protections—such as inheritance rights, tax advantages, and authority in healthcare decisions—that are essential for the security and well-being of same-sex couples. Similarly, Smith (2019) argues that civil unions represent a meaningful step toward full marriage equality, helping to break down systemic barriers faced by the LGBTQ+ community. However, in the Philippines, the Family Code only acknowledges marriage between a man and a woman, effectively denying same-sex couples equal legal recognition. This legal gap results in serious disadvantages, particularly in matters of inheritance, medical decision-making, and access to social security benefits. The study explores both quantitative and qualitative perspectives on civil unions, aiming to capture a deeper understanding of public perception. To achieve this, the researchers applied a comprehensive methodological approach that highlights the complexities of the issue. Thirty (30) Grade 12 HUMSS students participated as respondents, offering valuable insights through their diverse viewpoints and experiences. The results showed that the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the problems encountered in Civil Union have a significant impact on human rights (3.84), cultural and religious perspectives (3.57), social acceptance (3.78), legal implications (3.88), and personal beliefs (4.55). The solutions to the problem in cultural context (4.09), social environment (3.88), and legal and policy concerns (3.95), to improve legal rights (3.97), strengthen community support (3.99), flexibility in education and work (3.98), and greater awareness and empathy (4.09). Integrating discussions about civil unions into the classroom is essential for raising awareness of their role in promoting human rights. These conversations allow students to critically examine diverse cultural, religious, and legal viewpoints while encouraging empathy and fostering a culture of inclusion. Civil unions go beyond legal recognition—they represent a matter of human dignity and respect. By supporting civil unions, educators can help nurture a more accepting and inclusive community where individuals feel safe to live authentically and without prejudice.

RECOMMENDED CITATION

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