

Representation and Construction of Main Characters' Occupational Identities in Boys' Love and Girls' Love Thai Series Produced by GMMTV

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Abstract

Boys' Love and Girls' Love Thai series have become a significant soft power that creates the phenomenon of popularity in several countries across Asia. These series also reflect social issues to attract audiences and raise awareness of gender diversity and equality. Recently, Thailand officially enforced the Marriage Equality Law on 23 January 2025 (UN Human Rights Office for South-East Asia, 2025). Notably, the number of these series has kept increasing continuously, particularly from GMMTV, one of the leading Thai entertainment production companies in Thailand. The objectives of this study were to analyze the representation and construction of the main characters in the series. This study conducted a textual analysis of 20 Boys' Love and Girls' Love series produced by GMMTV, over a five-year span in the early 2020s, as defined by the researcher. The study focused on the construction of identities, occupational roles, and relationships, guided by Stuart Hall's representation theory. The findings revealed that the main characters are valued and given social space, demonstrating that they exist and lead meaningful lives. In contrast, when portrayed in mainstream series, they are often marginalized or overlooked. Storytelling emphasizes learning, personal growth, self-acceptance, and the ability to bring about societal change through a variety of occupational roles, such as doctors, teachers, forest protection officers, entrepreneurs, scholars, and lawyers, among others. They demonstrate their ability to contribute to society and drive change. The construction of occupational identities generates new representations that challenge traditional Thai values. These narratives function as cultural capital that may foster a deeper understanding of gender diversity in the future.

Keywords: representation, construction, Boys' Love, Girls' Love, Thai series

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Introduction

The Boys' Love Series and Girls' Love Series in Thailand have continuously become more popular both nationwide and worldwide. According to a report by ThaiPublica (2025), analysis by the SCB Economic Intelligence Center (SCB EIC) revealed that Y series, including Boys' Love and Girls' Love series, comprise an entertainment business with rapid growth in Thailand as well as overseas. Moreover, the popularity of Thai Y Series has risen as a result of the presenting of open relationships and reaching viewers through streaming. Also, in terms of public policy, the enforcement of the marriage equality law was announced on 23 July 2025 (Pongruengphant, 2025). These occurrences have drawn even more attention to the growth of the Boys' Love Series and Girls' Love Series with their plots that present interesting social issues.

One of the companies with nonstop production of Boys' Love and Girls' Love series is GMMTV, a leading company in the Thai entertainment industry. Disdtabong (2022) documented a six-year increase in GMMTV's Y series production, beginning with *SOTUS: The Series* (Samajarn & Samajarn, 2016–2018). The trend continued until 2022, reaching a total of 27 series (Disdtabong, 2022). Currently, GMMTV continues to produce Boys' Love and Girls' Love series.

The phenomenon of Thai Y Series, both Boys' Love and Girls' Love, has created huge economic value for the country, including additional business opportunities, e.g., a popular book business related to Y Novels, and entertainment businesses, e.g., concerts and fan meets featuring cast members from Y Series as the magnet for these events along with their role as product presenters (ThaiPublica, 2025). Thus, it is not surprising that Y Series have become Thailand's soft power to other countries. Furthermore, they also provide more media space for LGBTQIAN+.

As for the studies on Y Series, the research of Santawee (2022) on "The Representation of Boy Love in Thai Yaoi Series" found that the initial Y Series were mainly focused on the stories of Boys' Love rather than Girls' Love. Most Y Series are created based on novels written by female authors. For the images of the main characters, the roles of male leads are apparently masculine, while their male partners show feminine characteristics with tenderness and loveliness but still retain masculine appearances.

The most popular Boys' Love Series of GMMTV with a popular trend across Asia and worldwide is *2gether: The Series* (Thongjila, 2020) starring Bright-Vachirawit Chivaaree and Win-Metawin Opas-iamkajorn. During its on-air period, there were consistent viewers, resulting in a No. 1 trend on Twitter in Thailand and worldwide. The series was awarded Best Drama, Best Couple, and Best Actor from the Thailand Actors Awards in Japan 2021 (GMM Grammy, 2021).

Girls' Love Series or Yuri Series and Sapphic Series have also started to become more popular, compared with earlier periods. Female characters in these series are rarely presented or depicted as supporting couples, and their love stories are not outstanding. The presented images of the initial Thai Girls' Love were categorized based on physical appearances, which are known in Thai society as "Tom-Dee." Tom is derived from the word "Tomboy," while Dee is from the word "Lady" or possibly "Dyke," and refer to the images of Girls' Love. A "Tom" physically resembles males, with short hair, cool clothing, and a masculine appearance but with

a female mentality and tenderness. A “Dee” looks like ordinary girls but are attracted to girls with masculine appearances (“Toms”) (Suksamai, 2015; TCIJ, 2018).

The early image of Tom-Dee or Girls’ Love in the Thai social context, presented widely and successfully, was the movie called *Yes or No* (Wongsompetch, 2010). However, the presented images of Girls’ Love in media spaces eventually changed later on. The images of Girls’ Love are constructed with female characteristics, e.g., long hair and sweet appearances, with the presentation of two girls falling in love. This representation has over time been appearing more frequently in entertainment media.

Production of Girls’ Love Series, with the main characters as female couples, has been gradually increasing. The first Girls’ Love Series of GMMTV was *23.5 When the Earth is Spinning Around* (Kwanyu, 2023). This novel-based series was able to attract viewers throughout the country and overseas (Phatchaem, 2025; Rocket Media Lab, 2025) by presenting a love story of two lovely girls in their teens, who are studying in high school. The story was popular with viewers and inspiring as a presentation that opened new perspectives for storytelling about Girls’ Love.

GMMTV continues to produce Boys’ Love Series and Girls’ Love Series, which are still very popular in the country and overseas. As a result, storytelling about LGBTQIAN+ is appearing more often in mainstream entertainment media spaces. The growth of these series reflects changes in the Thai media industry, with a key role to create recognition and understanding of identities, gender, and relationships in contemporary society.

Hence, the primary objective of this study was to examine the representation and construction of the main characters’ identities in Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love Thai Series produced by GMMTV. The study is mainly focused on the dimensions of identities, occupational roles, and relationships in order to understand the roles of entertainment media in the construction of meanings and narration of stories about LGBTQIAN+ in the current Thai society.

Research Question

How do the Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love Series produced by GMMTV represent and construct identities, occupations, and relationships in Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love?

Objectives

1. To analyze the representation and construction of main characters’ identities in the Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love Thai Series produced by GMMTV.
2. To examine the representation and construction of main characters’ occupational identities in the Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love Series, including social meanings reflected through those occupations.
3. To analyze the representation and relationship construction of main characters’ occupational identities in the Boys’ Love and Girls’ Love Series in the dimensions of love, friendship, and power relationships in the contemporary social context.

Theoretical Framework

Textual analysis was used, relying on the concepts of representation and construction of identities developed in Stuart Hall's representation theory, who described that apart from reflecting stories in a society, media also construct the society through storytelling, languages, and symbolism for interpretation. Media choose to present some things and may leave out some others, and thus they create meanings for society through storytelling (Hall, 1997).

In this regard, presentation through entertainment media such as series facilitates the likelihood for viewers to recognize and absorb stories quickly because they usually introduce the love-related issues of the main characters. Beyond this, Boy Love and Girl Love series also construct identities and produce meanings that contribute to audience engagement, social acceptance, and social value.

For the purpose of this research, 20 Thai series produced by GMMTV, Thailand, were examined. The study focuses on a five-year span in the early 2020s, during which 16 Boys' Love series and 4 Girls' Love series formed the analytical corpus. The study analyzes 16 Boys' Love series produced by GMMTV including the following titles: *2gether: The Series* (Thongjila, 2020), *Still 2gether* (Chaiwimol, 2020), *My Gear and Your Gown* (Sawatmaneekul, 2020), *Fish Upon the Sky* (Wongsinwiset, 2021), *Bad Buddy Series* (Chaiwimol, 2021–2022), *We Are* (Sawatmaneekul, 2024), *Not Me* (Boonyawatana, 2021–2022), *Last Twilight* (Chaiwimol, 2023–2024), *Only Friends* (Chookamsri & Phukhaotong, 2023), *Tonhon Chonlatee* (Trakulkasemsuk, 2020–2021), *The Eclipse* (Sukkhapisit, 2022), *My School President* (Niyomsilp, 2022–2023), *My Love Mix-Up!* (Niyomsilp, 2024), *A Tale of Thousand Stars* (Chaiwimol, 2021), *Cupid's Last Wish* (Wongsinwiset, 2022), and *Moonlight Chicken* (Chaiwimol, 2023).

In addition, the corpus includes four Girls' Love series: *23.5 When the Earth is Spinning Around* (Kwanyu, 2023), *Pluto* (Snap25 Team, 2024), *Us* (Kwanyu, 2025) and *Whale Store xoxo* (Wongsinwiset, 2025).

The primary objective was to analyze characters' identities, occupational roles, and relationships in order to understand the perspectives of identity construction of Boys' Love and Girls' Love presented through modern stories.

Key Findings

According to the analysis of Boys' Love and Girls' Love Series produced by GMMTV, the research findings revealed the representation and construction of Boys' Love and Girls' Love in three dimensions, i.e., identities, occupational roles, love, and friendship, and power relationships.

Boys' Love Series: Identities

The series present stories of Boys' Love, divided into at least two age ranges, namely teenagers in high schools or universities and working adults. The representation of these characters can be examined through two main dimensions: their external appearance and their personality traits. Interesting representation was found as follows.

A Calm, Cool, Strong Boy With Leadership and a Cute, Cheerful, and Friendly Boy

2gether: The Series (Thongjila, 2020) and *Still 2gether* (Chaiwimol, 2020): These series present the story and identities of the two teenage male university students at the age of self-discovery. Thus, their physical images include a calm, cool, strong boy with leadership qualities along with a cute, cheerful, and friendly boy.

Top-Notch, Smart, Cool, Competitive Boys and Nerdy, Eye-Glassed, Studious Boys

My Gear and Your Gown (Sawatmaneeikul, 2020), *Fish Upon the Sky* (Wongsinwiset, 2021), and *Bad Buddy Series* (Chaiwimol, 2021–2022): These three series are about the friendship of boys as university students, with disagreements, competition, and battles of wits among the main male characters.

The series represented physical, psychological, and behavioral masculinity and featured tall, strong, healthy, smart, sporty, tough, daring, decisive, and competitive boys. The male leads in these series were usually studying in science-related faculties, e.g., the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Architecture, etc.

Likewise, *We Are* (Sawatmaneeikul, 2024) is a Boys' Love Series taking place at a university. It concentrates on love, studying, and self-searching. It is a joyful love story about falling in love, secret admiration, and chasing after a loved one. Also included were brotherhood and friendship, with the depiction of a group of cheerful friends.

The Fighting Boys and the Gentle and Kind Boys

Not Me (Boonyawatana, 2021–2022): This is the story of teenage twins as university students. The twins in this series possess different characteristics. The first one is strong, good at fighting, and wise, whereas the other one is not good at fighting, gentle, and does not like solving problems through the use of violence.

Last Twilight (Chaiwimol, 2023–2024): This series presents a sporty, strong, and healthy boy. Unfortunately, there is a turning point when he has a serious illness and may become blind. Consequently, he has to fight for himself to get strong again. The other boy who is stronger and good at fighting stands beside him and takes care of him in daily life.

Sentimental, Affectionate, and Emotional Boys

Only Friends (Chookamsri & Phukhaotong, 2023): This series is about the complicated relationships of a group of six friends in a story about confusing and awkward love. There are passionate love scenes and complicated relationships among friends. The characters vie for love and yearn for their loved ones and the love that must belong to them only. The images of the male characters in this series are filled with emotions, i.e., love, sorrow, happiness, disappointment, and sadness. It reveals intense emotions, different from the familiar images of boys who control their emotions and do not show any feelings.

A Caring Boy With Leadership and a Childish, Cute, and Vulnerable Boy

Tonhon Chonlatee (Trakulkasemsuk, 2020–2021): This Boys' Love Series is about teenagers at a university. The male leads are set as being in brotherhood, presenting the image of elder

and younger brothers although they are not actually related by blood. It represents vivid masculinity, with the image of the cautious and caring elder brother while the younger brother is cute, charming, and gentler.

A Disciplinary Boy and a Daring Boy Who Changes Society for the Better

The Eclipse (Sukkhapisit, 2022): The backdrop of this series is a famous boys' school. It is about the relationship between two boys, one of whom is ready to strictly abide by the school rules while the other is ready to resist the rules and change them, representing the socially expected image: one boy who follows the rules and the other one who is ready to fight and search for truths.

Daring Boys Who Follow Their Dreams

My School President (Niyomsilp, 2022–2023): This is a story about high-school friends with their dream to join a music band contest. They have to prove themselves in terms of their studies and musical talent. The series represents the images of a group of teenage boys obsessed with music, along with self-searching and the courage to show their feelings.

My Love Mix-Up! (Niyomsilp, 2024): This is a love story of teenage boys in a high school. The protagonist must find a way to confess his love and show his courage to tell his crush, which may prove his personal development and understanding of life, with the fulfilled and disappointed love, togetherness, and separation and goodbye that are experiences inevitable to all humans.

Boys in the World of Working and Businesses

Several Boys' Love Series also present working age characters, i.e., *A Tale of Thousand Stars* (Chaiwimol, 2021), *Cupid's Last Wish* (Wongsinwiset, 2022), and *Moonlight Chicken* (Chaiwimol, 2023), which are stories of Boys' Love with friendship and family. In these series, Boys' Love develops from co-worker relationships with students, including the world of work and problem-solving, and numerous other characters with a variety of age ranges. There is also a male character with a hearing impairment, implying that boys can be weak and need care.

To summarize, the representations in Boys' Love Thai series can be analyzed through two main dimensions: external appearance and personality traits. The representations found in Boys' Love Thai Series physically reveal ordinary boys with fit and firm bodies. They are basically tall, strong, healthy, with fair or light, yellow-toned skin and clean, short hair, wear trousers and embrace masculinity. Their bodies are the primary physical appearance as they are equal to a social capital. Thus, Boys' Love is represented as pleasant and harmless.

Regarding habits and personalities, there are the calm, cool, strong boy with leadership; the cute and empathetic boy; the nerdy and wise boy wearing eyeglasses; the mature and warm boy; and the childish, affectionate, vulnerable boy, representing various masculine characteristics. There are also the images of gentle boys, e.g., painting, playing music, and cooking. Nevertheless, the point is these series present the male bodies as well as characteristics that are generally accepted in the major social trends. These masculine characteristics might be viewed by girls in the groups of Boys' Love Thai Series fans. The series may also indirectly argue or imply that Boys' Love characters are normal like other boys in order to reduce the stereotype of Boys' Love as weak or abnormal.

Girls' Love Series: Identities

Four Girls' Love series produced by GMMTV were selected for analysis, and their representations were examined in terms of external appearance and personality traits, and the interesting representations were found as follows.

An Introverted Girl and an Outstanding and Attractive Girl

23.5 When the Earth is Spinning Around (Kwanyu, 2023): This is the story of Girls' Love at a private high school, in which a girl from a rural area comes to study in Bangkok. She is introverted, wears eyeglasses, and rarely communicates with others. She meets a pretty, lovely, and smart girl who is the school star. With regard to their physical appearances, they have long hair, wear skirts, and look pretty and lovely.

A Smart Working Girl and a Girl Who Needs Care

Pluto (Snap25 Team, 2024): This is a love story between a pair of twins and another girl. The girls in the series are presented as the young pretty girls with long hair. Both of them have feminine characteristics but different personalities. The first girl is cool, smart, wise, and able to ride a motorcycle, but sentimental, while the other girl is blind, pretty, tearful, and imaginative.

A Smart, Pretty Girl Who Is True to Herself and an Empathetic Girl

Us (Kwanyu, 2025): This is a love story between a young doctor and a university student. She secretly likes her, but does not have the courage to confess her love because her brother also secretly falls in love with the doctor. The story communicates the overcoming of the feeling that Girls' Love is wrong, which then turns into the valuing of love. The doctor is pretty, well-mannered, smart, kind, and tender, while the student is lovely, kind, and ready to step aside for her brother's love.

Whale Store xoxo (Wongsinwiset, 2025): Khun Wan, a girl who is a former company employee, returns to her family grocery business after her father dies. Ajarn Maewnam helps her with the business plan to keep the store open. The love story between Khun Wan and Maewnam makes us realize that in the world of Girls' Love, they are ordinary people in society who just want to have a good life. Khun Wan reflects a strong, patient girl who is determined to create security in her life. She looks normal and pretty, with long hair. Maewnam, the lecturer, is from a rich family. She looks feminine, small, sweet, and also has long hair but can work like a boy. Her extra jobs are repairs and delivery, representing a tender, strong image of a girl with leadership skills.

To summarize, Girls' Love Thai Series represent female physical appearance through the healthy, clean girls with long hair, who wear skirts or trousers. They are tender and well-mannered, or also sometimes smart. Most of them are independent, working girls who are intelligent, with self-care, leadership, decisiveness, and the courage to express their feelings to their loved ones. Although they are scared to be rejected by their families or society, they choose to show that Girls' Love is beautiful, valuable, and based on sincerity similar to other forms of love.

These changes reflect the development of the representation of Girls' Love in Thai media, from "Tom-Dee" to the construction of various and flexible identities conforming to more realistic portrayals of the life of girls in contemporary society. It also expands the visibility, space and understanding of LGBTQIAN+ in the dimension of "being humans" and provides more elaborate details. Nonetheless, the constructed images of Girls' Love in the series are from the selection of pretty, smart, working, and competent girls. However, there may be other different identities of Girls' Love that have not been presented so far.

Boys' Love Series: Occupational Roles

Presenting the occupational roles and work in Boys' Love Series is a significant process for the construction of value and meanings of characters as the members with social roles. This study found that the Boys' Love Series produced by GMMTV present various occupations and social status of male characters. Those occupations are usually linked to the identities, responsibilities, and development of the characters. The following are the occupational roles that were identified in this study.

High School and University Students

Most Boys' Love Series present the stories of high school and university students. *2gether: The Series* (Thongjila, 2020), *Still 2gether* (Chaiwimol, 2020), *My Gear and Your Gown* (Sawatmaneekul, 2020), *Tonhon Chonlatee* (Trakulkasemsuk, 2020–2021), *Fish Upon the Sky* (Wongsinwiset, 2021), *Bad Buddy Series* (Chaiwimol, 2021–2022), *Not Me* (Boonyawatana, 2021–2022), *Only Friends* (Chookamsri & Phukhaotong, 2023), and *We Are* (Sawatmaneekul, 2024) are the stories that involve university students.

The male leads are well-educated, studying in the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Architecture, etc. because these fields are usually well-paid, with high income and social acceptance. *Last Twilight* (Chaiwimol, 2023–2024) presents the role of a basketball player who has a serious illness, but never gives up. Being an athlete reflects value, strength, and possibly a more special status than other people.

One clear example can be seen in *Only Friends* (Chookamsri & Phukhaotong, 2023), where most main characters are university students with different dreams, lifestyles, and social backgrounds.

Some characters are academically focused, while others are connected to creative or service-oriented work. For instance, one character is a music instrument repairer who works to support himself, another is skilled in photography and visual storytelling, and another works in mobile and IT repair. Meanwhile, some characters come from wealthy families and live a more luxurious lifestyle.

The Eclipse (Sukkhapisit, 2022), *My School President* (Niyomsilp, 2022–2023), and *My Love Mix-Up!* (Niyomsilp, 2024) are about high school students. Besides love, their passions, e.g., music playing, activities, learning, development, friendships, and problem-solving skills, are also presented.

These male characters are reflected as having a bright future and acting as a valuable social resource. They are competent learners and have the potential to be successful in life. Their

representation can reduce bias and bring legitimacy for the existence of Boys' Love as a major social trend. Overall, the series largely portray middle-class occupations and lifestyles.

A Teacher, a Forest Protection Officer, a Business Owner, and a Chef

A Tale of Thousand Stars (Chaiwimol, 2021): Love in this series is linked through the work of a teacher and a forest protection officer. A young boy who receives a heart donation applies to be a volunteer teacher in a mountain village. He falls in love with a forest protection officer. Both of them are determined, working as a teacher as well as a forest protection officer at their best, thereby constructing the image of Boys' Love as devoted people with a public mind and social responsibility.

Cupid's Last Wish (Wongsinwiset, 2022): This is the story about a young boy, the owner of a dairy farm, who inherits his dead father's business. He must try to carry on the business operations and solve various problems in life. Presenting this entrepreneurial occupation reflects leadership, responsibility, and maturity.

Moonlight Chicken (Chaiwimol, 2023): This is the story about a young boy who is the owner and the chef of a Hainanese chicken rice restaurant. Because he loves cooking, he proves that this job is meaningful and valuable. Apart from selling tasty chicken rice, he provides mental support for the people around him.

In the world of Boys' Love created by the media, these constructed meanings can be interpreted as demonstrating that these boys have received good care and grown up very well, are well-educated, and are learners like other people. In some cases, these images even reflect connotative pressure that the characters must be smarter or more virtuous than others in order to be accepted.

The occupational groups represented in Boys' Love series therefore include university students, as well as high-status professions such as doctors, business executives, corporate heirs, and state officials. In addition, Boys' Love narratives frequently feature creative professions, including artists, musicians, and chefs.

Overall, these career representations tend to center on middle-class, socially prestigious, and economically stable identities, reinforcing aspirational and socially acceptable images of masculinity within contemporary media.

These stories encourage viewers, open perspectives toward human diversity, and confirm that these boys have valuable, meaningful roles in society.

Girls' Love Series: Occupational Roles

The female characters in these series are high school students, university students, a dentist/doctor, a motorbike rider, a business owner, and a university lecturer.

These roles enlarge the representation of Girls' Love beyond a merely love-related frame. Viewers perceive that these girls have dreams, goals, and responsibilities like other people in society.

High School Students at a Private School

23.5 When the Earth is Spinning Around (Kwanyu, 2023): This series presents the story at a private school, where the characters spend the majority of their time. The social interactions at the school may imitate those of the real world and life of high school students, i.e., their studies, extra-curricular activities, and love/relationships.

A Motorbike Rider, a Novel Writer and a Lawyer

Pluto (Snap25 Team, 2024): The occupational roles of the main characters are obvious in two dimensions: a motorbike rider and a novel writer. The first job is usually regarded as being for males because it requires physical force, agility, and working in public. Presenting a girl in this role is challenging as it is linked to gender. Novel writing reflects the female role as a meaning creator and storyteller. Meanwhile, the role of a lawyer represents authority, knowledge, and access to institutional power. As a profession associated with legal systems, social justice, and public credibility, portraying a female lawyer constructs an image of intellectual competence and social legitimacy. It situates Girls' Love characters within formal structures of power rather than limiting them to private emotional spaces.

Together, these three occupations expand the representation of women in GL series beyond romance, positioning them as economically active, intellectually capable, and socially empowered individuals.

A Dentist/Doctor and a Student Working as a Part-Time Coffee Shop Staff

Us (Kwanyu, 2025): This series presents the occupation of a dentist/doctor as the backdrop. This occupation requires knowledge and a high level of responsibility, and is praised in society. Presenting a female doctor in the context of Girls' Love adds value to the characters and reflects that girls are as competent in specialized professions as boys. The presented female student working part-time in a coffee shop reflects the effort of self-reliance and life management in the real world.

A Grocery Owner, a Company Employee, a Lecturer, and a Repair Girl

Whale Store xoxo (Wongsinwiset, 2025): This series presents various occupational roles, from a company employee, a grocery owner, to a university lecturer, along with the female character's skills to repair things and electrical appliances at home. These roles eliminate the gender stereotype related to repair work and business administration. They construct the image of multi-skilled girls with leadership abilities who can securely take care of themselves.

Overall, the representations of the occupational roles of the female characters in the studied Girls' Love Series are constructed as modern working girls who have dreams, goals, and key roles in society. Thus, these series not only focus on love but also expand the visual space of girls and Girls' Love in the dimensions of work, capabilities, and social participation.

In Girls' Love series, occupational representations often differ in emphasis from Boy Love narratives. Girls' Love characters are frequently portrayed as working professionals rather than predominantly university students. These careers typically position female characters as economically independent and socially established.

Presenting the characters with occupations and employment in Boys' Love and Girls' Love Thai Series significantly confirms their "selves" as valuable people with social roles. Occupations and work are the mechanisms of identity construction as responsible, competent persons with self-reliance and provide legitimacy for the existence of Boys' Love and Girls' Love in the public space. Presenting them through the series creates a variety of images of life rather than love only.

Despite the presented characters with occupations that confirm their value, the selection process reflects that some representation forms are more outstanding than others. Competent and successful characters are usually highlighted. Nonetheless, further opening of space for storytelling that presents more various occupations and ways of life in the future is necessary.

Love, Friendship, and Power Relationships

Love, friendship, and power relationships function as the key mechanisms to drive the stories of Boys' Love and Girls' Love.

Love and relationships are the space to communicate identities, development, and social power negotiation. In this study, the forms of love and relationships are divided into two phases, i.e., during academic life and during work life.

Love, friendship, and power relationships during the teenage years and school life are joyful, warm, and lively. It is a time of self-discovery and pulling through together in terms of studies, family expectations, school rules, and social pressure; however, it has not progressed to living together as a family or with a legal commitment. In these groups of series, the characters are still high school or university students, e.g., *2gether: The Series* (Thongjila, 2020), *My Gear and Your Gown* (Sawatmaneekul, 2020), *Tonhon Chonlatee* (Trakulkasemsuk, 2020–2021), *The Eclipse* (Sukkhapisit, 2022), *My School President* (Niyomsilp, 2022–2023), and *My Love Mix-Up!* (Niyomsilp, 2024).

These series present love parallel to friendship and the development process. The characters use schools or universities as the space for identity negotiation. Friendship functions as a safe space, and power relationships appear through family roles and social rules. Despite no images of living together formally in this age range, the characters usually dream and hope to build a long-term future together.

When presenting relationships at working age, the characters have jobs and more obvious goals. Their love is securely and seriously constructed and linked to future plans, living together, and married life. In addition, the characters must face power relationships in the contexts of workplaces, families, and more complicated social structures. The stories usually end with relationship development and moving in with each other to live together, e.g., *Us* (Kwanyu, 2025). Some series show weddings or marriage registration, like *Pluto* (Snap25 Team, 2024) and *Whale Store xoxo* (Wongsinwiset, 2025) in the Girls' Love Thai Series. These reflect the changes occurring in the social and legal contexts in Thai society. Thus, love during this age range is not personal but linked to existence in public spaces and social acceptance.

Conclusion

This study on the representation and construction of main characters' identities in the Boys' Love and Girls' Love Thai Series produced by GMMTV opens perspectives and reveals the

development of Thai series with a space for LGBTQIAN+. We can observe various identities, with representation of the characters within the dimensions of work, occupations, hidden social issues, and social interests, including relationships in the Boys' Love and Girls' Love Series that tend to develop toward legal certification and building a family. Such presentation reflects recent changes seen in the social context and more open attitudes toward LGBTQIAN+ in Thai society.

The Boys' Love and Girls' Love Series produced by GMMTV both function as a crucial cultural space to produce, create, and negotiate meanings related to identities, genders, occupations, and relationships through the representations of the complications of human experiences that are linked to real life. Such representations increase the understanding of LGBTQIAN+ and provide a space for various stories in the form of entertainment media.

However, the representations remain largely centered on middle-class, socially accepted identities. Future research and media production may further expand diversity in terms of class, gender expression, and intersectional identities.

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