

 <p>ISSN NO. 2320-5407</p>	<p>Journal Homepage: - www.journalijar.com</p> <h2>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)</h2> <p>Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/12661 DOI URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/12661</p>	 <p>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) ISSN 2320-5407 Journal Homepage: http://www.journalijar.com Journal DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01</p>
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON HOMOPHOBIA AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN KOLKATA

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 05 February 2021

Final Accepted: 10 March 2021

Published: April 2021

Key words:-

Homophobia, Homophobia
Measurement, Homophobia Scale,
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LGBT

Abstract

Present paper gives a bird's eye view about the empirical study on homophobia among post graduate students group in Kolkata. The importance of the present study is to identify the differences in the irrational fear about the shamefulness of homosexuality among boys and girls studying post graduation in Kolkata. The sample of the study consisted of 15 boys and 15 girls with age group of 21-23 years were drawn from different post graduate colleges in Kolkata. The scales used were Homophobia scale by Wright, L. W., Adams, H. E., & Bernat, J. (1999). The Homophobia scale includes items that examine social avoidance and aggressive acting, when individuals are measured with this scale. A t-test was used to identify the significant differences between boys and girls in terms of homophobia level among them. The results of the study clearly indicate that there is no significant difference among the sexes with respect to the irrational fear about discrimination, rejection from the community regarding homosexuality.

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Introduction:-

Homophobia refers to various poor attitudes in the direction of homosexual people that can be expressed on the character, cultural, and institutional level. Whilst homophobia has advanced for the duration of history, it keeps creating a full-size poor impact on folks that are the unlucky targets of contempt, prejudice, and violence. The situation of homosexuality has been a context for health care professionals for a long time. Even though, the debate over its reason and the way homosexuals has to be treated is a much keyed debate for humans from all walks of existence. Many psychologists have spent time and endeavor into the experimental observe of people's attitudes closer to homosexuality. Homophobia, this termed become coined by using Weinberg (1972), become firstly described as the dread of being in near quarters with homosexual men and women in addition to flimsy worry, hatred, and intolerance with the aid of heterosexual individuals of gay males and females. It has been proven that guys are normally more homophobic than women. One examine that lent help to this statement no longer most effective found men to be greater homophobic, but additionally less equal-intercourse intimate, greater sexist, and behaving greater in conventional gender roles than girls (Stark, 1991). Overall, both men and women who strongly supported traditional male/female roles in regards to gender and family were found to be more homophobic than men and women who held more lax views. The reasons for men typically being more homophobic are still unclear. However research suggests that part of the answer may be that men's and women's responses to homosexuality have different origins (Reiter, 1991). Reiter suggested that men may see homosexuality as a threat to their core gender identity, while women view lesbians as less threatening to their femininity. Homosexuality has also shown to be somewhat of a deterrent for men who engage in sexually indiscriminate behavior (Cochran & Peplars, 1991). Factors such as perceptions of personal vulnerability, and homophobia produced high levels of worry in men which then elicited a change in behavior.

At the same time as homophobia would possibly traditionally had been applied simplest to the ones taken into consideration to be lesbian or gay, the term additionally extends to bisexual individuals and transgender and transsexual individuals(LGBT). In fashionable, based totally on how homophobia varies by means of numerous social and cultural factors, it appears to stem from lack of awareness or irrational fear of the strange. Religion can be a motive of homophobia. Sure religions train that homosexual appeal is immoral or a sin. For this reason, folks who ascribe to these religions will develop up with this as their cultural information. This type of early gaining knowledge of may be hard to shift or alternate. This kind of apprehension for homosexuality can lead to phobic attitude among the adults. Individuals those who convey more homophobia exhibit a greater rigid response when viewing explicit sexual images than did those who did not express homophobic attitudes.

Objectives:-

To find out whether there is a significant difference in terms of homophobia among girls and boys of post graduate students in Kolkata.

a. To find out whether there is a significant difference in terms of behavior / negative affect among girls and boys of post graduate students in Kolkata.

b. To find out whether there is a significant difference in terms of affect / behavioral Aggression among girls and boys of post graduate students in Kolkata.

c. To find out whether there is a significant difference in terms of cognitive negativism among girls and boys of post graduate students in Kolkata.

Methods:-

Procedure:

Samples were selected from post graduation students those who are currently in their first year .A questionnaire was prepared via, Google form regarding Homophobia due to the pandemic situation where the subjects was instructed to respond to all the items. Response categories were 1. Strongly Agree, 2. Agree. 3. Neutral, 4. Disagree, 5. Strongly Disagree. The students should take an average time of 5-8 minutes. After the responses were collected from both the 15 boys and girls, the scoring was done for each item according to the scoring standards. A t-test was used to determine the significant difference between the subscales for homophobia scale. Finally the results tables and discussion was mentioned.

Tools:

The study tells the development and validation of Homophobia scale. The Homophobia Scale was used to describe the homophobia levels of subjects. The scale was developed to assess the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of homophobia. The scale comprises of 25-item questionnaire consisting of three factors: a factor that measures mainly negative cognitions regarding homosexuality, a factor that measures primarily negative affect and avoidance of homosexual individuals and a factor that measures negative affect and aggression toward homosexual Individuals. This scale is self-reporting. In this scale the participants answer on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).The scale yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.936.

Results and Discussion:-

The table below revealed the mean, standard deviation, standard error of mean and t-test of homophobia considering girls' and boys' master's degree students in Kolkata.

From the above result it has been found that the mean score for girls' master's degree students (n=15) was 19.13 (SD=12.28). The mean score for boys' master's degree students (n=15) was 20.33 (SD=19.75). An independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference based on gender of subjects (t=0.200). The boys seemed to scored significantly higher on the total scores of Homophobia scale, suggesting higher level of homophobic responding. This might indicate from the present study that for both boys and girls they had a poor attitudes and apprehension towards homosexuality or folks who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, homosexual, bisexual or transgender it has been described as contempt, prejudice, aversion, hatred or antipathy, that can be based totally on irrational fear and lack of knowledge, and is frequently associated with non secular beliefs. Disapproval of homosexuality and of gay humans is not frivolously disbursed throughout society, however is extra or less

pronounced in step with age, ethnicity, geographic place, race, sex, social magnificence, education, partisan identification and non secular repute. Students of the present age group considered in the present study seemed to have these apprehensions that might stems from ignorance or irrational fear of the unfamiliar.

Again from the table below showed the importance of different factors in homophobia that are represented here as Behavior / Negative Affect, Affect / Behavioral Aggression, Cognitive Negativism:

Table 1:- Showing different factors (Behavior / Negative Affect, Affect / Behavioral Aggression, Cognitive Negativism) of homophobia of girls and boys master's degree students in Kolkata.

Factors of Homophobia	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-test	Significance	Remarks
Factor 1 : Behavior / Negative Affect	Girls	15	7.3333	6.03166	1.55737	0.118	0.907	NS
	Boys	15	7.6000	6.29966	1.62657			
Factor 2 :Affect / Behavioral Aggression	Girls	15	8.0667	5.77515	1.49114	0.077	0.94	NS
	Boys	15	8.2667	8.31064	2.14580			
Factor 3:Cognitive Negativism	Girls	15	3.7333	3.21751	0.83076	0.779	0.442	NS
	Boys	15	4.7333	3.78845	0.97817			

To determine the factors on the scale of homophobia that include 25-item revised version of the homophobia scale the use of principal components analysis solution (Harman,1976) was done . The boys' participants scored higher in all the three subscales indicating that boys have more negative cognitions, more negative affect and more social avoidance and more behavioural acting out i.e aggression those women, which is consistent with the previous research (D'Augeilli& Ross 1990) showing that men are more homophobic than women.

The first factor, Behavior/ Negative Affect, contained 10 items that evaluated primarily negative affect and avoidance behaviors. In Factor 1, the subscale score mean for girls students was 7.33 (SD =6.03). The subscale score mean for boys students was 7.60 (SD = 6.29). The obtained t score of the subjects for both genders has been found to 0.118. So, it can be said that there is no significant difference among boys and girls using revised version of homophobia scale factor 1 and it indicates that subjects may tend to have a less negative affect conditions on the homophobic scale., Both the genders indicated negative affect or avoidance behaviors toward people who identify as homosexual. Rigid gender roles were additionally stated as posing conflicts and proscribing self-expression for a few young people. The negative response towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender among boys and girls for dealing with a stigmatized identity was almost equal. Both girls and boys have a feeling of social isolation and negative internalized feelings related to Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth have greater vulnerability to a wide range of health, mental health, and social problems (Austin et al., 2009).

The second factor, Affect/ Behavioural Aggressive, contained 10 items that evaluated primarily aggressive behaviours and negative affect. In Factor 2, the subscale score mean for girls subjects was 8.06 (SD =5.77). The subscale score mean for boys was 8.26 (SD=8.31). The obtained t -score of the students for both genders has been found to 0.077. So, it can be said that there is no significant differences among boys and girls using revised version of Homophobia scale factor 2 and it indicates that the both boys and girls have behavioural aggression on homophobia. Boys and girls endorse negative behaviors, aggression, or negative affect related to people who identify as homosexuality. Bullying on the idea of sexuality is a commonplace enjoy for young those who are same intercourse attracted or for those who might not behave in line with gender stereotypes. Due to psychosocial disturbances caused due to the concept of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender adults generally have an irrational fear for not accepted by their social environment.

The third factor, Cognitive Negativism, contained 5 items that evaluated negative attitudes and cognition. In factor 3, the subscale score mean for girls was 3.73 (SD=3.21). The subscale for mean for boys was 4.73 (SD=3.78). The obtained t -score of the students for both genders has been found to 0.779. So, it can be said that there is no significant differences between boys and girls using homophobia scale factor 3 and it indicates that the subjects showed cognitive negativism on homophobia. Both the participants in the present study have negative attitudes or cognitions regarding individuals who identify as homosexuality. Despite persistent changes in peoples' attitudes

over the past decades even today individual's remains prejudice and stereotyping view in their mind to accept lesbians and gay individual in Indian society.

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