

Attitudes of Heterosexuals towards LGBT Community: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

LGBT community since times immemorial has been a victim of prejudice, discrimination and even hatred in most of the communities and cultures. The present study was conducted to study the attitudes of three age groups in metropolitan setting of Delhi and NCR towards LGBT community. A cross-sectional study was carried out a convenience sample of 180 urban Indian males and females from Delhi and national capital region. They belonged to three different age groups- 60 young adults (18-35 years of age), 60 middle-aged adults (35-55 years of age) and 60 old adults (55+ years of age). The sample consisted of 30 males and 30 females for each age group. The quantitative measures of attitudes included the Riddle Scale (Riddle, 1973) and Lesbians, Gays and Bisexual Knowledge and Attitude Scale for Heterosexuals (LGB-KASH). The qualitative data was obtained using a self constructed semi-structured interview scale containing 10 questions. The quantitative measures were administered to all the 180 participants whereas the interview was conducted with 15 participants. Quantitative data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation, one-way between subjects ANOVA. Post-hoc analysis was done using the Tukey HSD. Qualitative data from the interview schedule was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study clearly establishes that attitudes towards LGBT community vary across the three age groups with young adults holding the most positive attitudes followed by middle-aged and old adults. Though, all the age groups believed in equal rights and privileges for LGBT community but old adults were completely non-accepting of a LGBT relative. It was also observed that some old adults were not even aware of the concept. Though, very few participants volunteered any suggestions for improvement of attitudes of heterosexual persons towards LGBT community some useful suggestions came up like increasing awareness and interaction, decriminalization of homosexuality, equal rights privileges, educational and job opportunities for LGBT and positive role of media and famous personalities.

Keywords: LGBT Community, Attitudes, Heterosexuals

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Introduction

LGBT is a way of life practiced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, sometimes referred to as queer culture. It varies widely by geography and the identity of the individuals. Not all LGBT individuals identify with LGBT culture which may be due to lack of knowledge of the subculture's existence, geographic distance, fear of social stigma or an inclination for remaining unidentified with sexuality- or gender-based subcultures or communities. "Homosexuality" was the main term used until the late 1950s and early 1960s; after that, a new "gay" culture emerged. "This new gay culture increasingly marks a full spectrum of social life: not only same-sex desires but gay selves, gay neighbors, and gay social practices that are distinctive of our affluent, postindustrial society" (Herdt, 1992). Earlier (19th and 20th century) gay culture was a hidden phenomenon which relied on secret symbols and codes woven into an overall straight context. In early America, gay influence was primarily limited to high social class. Similar to current time, gay men have been associated with opera, ballet, couture, fine cuisine and musical theater. Openness related to gays was limited but due to phenomenon of AIDS, several celebrities came out of the closet (Black AIDS Institute, 2006). Lesbian culture has always been entwined with the evolution of feminism, especially since the late 20th century. Older stereotypes of lesbian women emphasized a dichotomy between "butch" women, or dykes (who adhered to male stereotypes) and "femmes", or lipstick lesbians (who followed female stereotypes), and considered the typical lesbian couple a butch-femme pair. Terms such as "butch" or "femme" have become normalized and these categories are less rigid and more common. Bisexual culture focuses on opposing or disregarding fixed sexual and gender identity mono-sexism (discrimination against bisexual individuals), bisexual erasure and bi-phobia (hatred or mistrust of non-mono-sexual people). Bi-phobia is common in the gay, lesbian and straight communities. Transgender refers to individuals whose identity, behavior, expression as well as general sense of self do not conform with what has been associated to the sex they are born with. Termed as *eunuchs* in Western culture, they have been popularly called as *Hijras* in Indian Culture. In Indian context, this community gains importance during festivities and celebratory events for providing prosperous blessings. It is also a primary source of income for them as they are not easily accepted in other work settings.

There exist plenty of examples in Vedic and Hindu texts of saints and gods transcending sexes like Lord Mohini and Ardhanarishwara. Transgenders have been an integral part of the Indian society. Instances of same sex are described in Indian epics and Indian mythology. The Kamasutra also talks about feelings for the same sex. Being attracted to the same sex was

never considered to be a crime and trans genders were venerated, however, things changed upon the advent of British in India (www.wordpress.com, 2015). Sage Vatsayana, author of the treatise on love, the Kamasutra, stated that homosexual practice is acceptable by the holy writ. Kamasutra describes homosexual intercourse in depth. Lord Siva and Krishna are known to have been involved in homosexual activities.

A variety of images of gods, goddesses, demons, sages, warriors, lovers, priests, plants and animals were seen on the walls and gateways of the Indian temples in the sixth century AD. Amongst these, one can find erotic images which the modern law deems unnatural and obscene. Similar images are built on Buddhism and Jainism temples around the same time. The erotic sculptures represent dignified couples exchanging romantic glances and wild orgies involving warriors, sages etc. Valmiki Ramayana describes that Hanuman is said to have seen Rakshasa women kissing and embracing other women who have already been kissed and embraced by Ravana. More prevalent are stories of women turning into men and vice versa. Drupada, in the Mahabharata, raises his daughter Shikhandini as a man and gets 'him' a wife. On the wedding night, everything is ruined when the wife discovers the truth. Perhaps the most popular stories revolving around gender metamorphoses are those related to Mohini, the female incarnation of Lord Vishnu. They are found in many Puranas. Vishnu becomes a woman to trick demons and tempt sages. In the Brahmavaivarta Purana, Mohini tells Brahma, "Any man who refuses to satisfy a willing woman in her fertile period is a eunuch." In ancient India, men who were considered 'unlike men', or incapable to have intercourse with women, were deprived of their manhood and were expected to live a women's life. This most likely explains the existence of the hijra community in India. Kliba is a term used for men who are completely male or female. The Brahmana texts, which were written eight centuries before Christ reveals that there was sorrow upon the separation of the three worlds. The sorrow of the heaven was cast into a whore (socially improper woman) by the gods, sorrow of the nether regions into the rogue (socially improper man) and kliba took upon the sorrow of the Earth (biologically imperfect human). In Hindu texts like Manusmriti, the kliba was not allowed to participate in rituals and could not possess property. The kliba was known to be an umbrella term in the eyes of the Scholars unlike present-day words like namard and napunsak, for which the meaning could vary from sexually dysfunctional male to an impotent man or a homosexual. A particular text has described fourteen types of klibas, one of them being a man who utilizes his mouth as a vagina (mukhabhaga). Kama Sutra gives a disdainful reference to male masseurs indulging in oral sex (auparashtika). The writer was not particularly in favor of homosexual activities even though he wrote about it (Devdutt). He uses the term *tritiya-prakriti* (third sex) for defining men with a homosexual

desire. Such men have been classified as those having a feminine appearance, and those having a manly appearance with beards, mustaches and a muscular built (Vatsyayana, Kama Sutra, 3rd Century A.D.). The *Kama Sutra* further explains the *svairini* (independent woman) involved in aggressive lovemaking with other women (Vatsyayana, Kama Sutra, 3rd Century A.D.). Lesbians, either masculine or impotent with men; bisexuals, transgenders and intersex types are also mentioned in detail in the voluminous Hindu scriptures of India (Wilhelm). With relevant understanding, ancient Hindu or Vedic culture did not punish homosexuals of the third sex. It rather accepted their nature as it was and incorporated them into society. Hindu texts such as the *Kama Sutra*, *Mahabharata*, *Artha-sastra*, etc. identified third-gender men working as domestic servants, barbers, masseurs, florists and prostitutes. The *Kama Sutra* also describes homosexual marriages based on “great attachment and complete faith in one another.” Transgenders are described as especially talented in the feminine arts of music playing and dancing (Vyasa, 400 BC) and lesbians are mentioned as businesswomen, armed military guards, domestic servants and courtesans (Vatsyayana, Kama Sutra, 3rd Century A.D.). Homosexuals, transgenders and other third-gender people in traditional Hindu society were renowned for their status and for holding special powers that allow them to bless or curse others; a traditional belief relevant in India today (Prabhupada). Homosexual behavior among the *kliba*, uninitiated males and adult females is not considered as a punishable offense in traditional Hindu texts, as such acts seemed to be relatively harmless and discouraged only among the Brahmins because high standard behavior was expected of them. In contrast, there are negative attitudes about homosexuality within Hinduism, especially nowadays. Such attitudes can be looked back at religious fundamentalism or a lack of spiritual evolution, both within Hinduism and among other religious teachings from outside India. The prevailing Islamic influence was to publicly disavow homosexual behavior while privately engaging oneself. Another practice introduced under Islamic rule was the practice of castrating domestic man servants and slaves. In traditional Hinduism, effeminate men of the third gender (*shandha*) would dress up as women and tie their genitals against the groin with a *kaupina* (cloth undergarment), however, they were not known to practice castration. Nineteenth-century attitudes of Christians viewed homosexuality as “unnatural,” “perverted,” “a mental illness,” “a chosen vice,” “shocking,” a “growing modern menace,” etc (Vanita & Kidwai, Same-Sex Love in India). However, these harmful beliefs and attitudes have now been engrained in the Hindu values as well, over time. There are a number of ancient Indian texts which are relevant to modern LGBT causes. The *Arthashastra*, an ancient Indian treatise on statecraft, mentions a wide variety of non-vaginal sexual practices which, whether performed with a man or a woman, were sought to

be punished with the lowest grade of fine. While homosexual intercourse was not sanctioned, it was treated as a very minor offence, and several kinds of heterosexual intercourse were punished more severely. Sex between non-virgin women incurred a very small fine, while homosexual intercourse between men was sought to be censured by a prescription of a bath with one's clothes on, and a penance of "eating the five products of the cow and keeping a one-night fast" - the penance being a replacement of the traditional concept of homosexual intercourse resulting in a loss of caste (Vanita & Kidwai, 2000)..

During colonial period, the British Raj banned homosexual relations under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which entered into force in 1861. The ban was done throughout most of the British Empire due to the Christian religious beliefs of the British colonial governments. In 2009, Naz Foundation challenged the Section 377 and other legal prohibitions against same-sex conduct as they violated the fundamental rights of an Indian citizen as stated in the constitution. Following this, the law was struck down by the Delhi High Court. The applicability of the Law is throughout the nation. In support of this, Anjali Gopalan led the First Genderqueer Pride Parade of Asia in Madurai in 2012 (Vasudevan, 2015). In 1977, Shakuntala Devi published the first study of homosexuality in India. The book features interviews with two (young) Indian Men who were seeking legal marriage in Canada, a temple priest who explained his opinions on homosexuality. The book also contains the reviews of existing literature on homosexuality. It concludes with a call to decriminalize homosexuality and full and complete acceptance not only tolerance and sympathy for homosexuality. Similarly in 2012, the Supreme Court decriminalized gay sex after a many people filed for appeals. The Court accepted that homosexuality is a changing aspect of the society and hence, needs to be accepted with passage of time. The Apex court also found resistance to the Delhi High Court decision from anti-gay groups and political organizations. To this, the Court held the stand that Homosexuality must not been seen only in terms of sexual intercourse and must be viewed in terms of reflection of changing times. Similar resistance was also provided by the Home Ministry as they felt that homosexuality was Immoral and against the social order. On 28 February 2012, The Central Government reversed its stand and asserted that there was no mistake in decriminalizing gay sex. This resulted in the SC criticizing the Centre for frequently changing its stand on the issue. On the contrary, organizations developed a guide 'Creating Inclusive Workplaces for LGBT Employees in India' to express their support for the cause. However, India's top court, in 2013, endorsed the introduction of a law that criminalized gay sex against the landmark 2009 Delhi High Court order which had decriminalized homosexual acts. The court said it was an issue that the parliament had to legislate on. A number of gay pride parades

have been done in India since then as a protest of reinstatement of section 377 (Bangalore, 2013; Surat, 2013; Guwahati, 2014; Orange City LGBT Pride March in Nagpur, 2016). This resulted in a number of political parties (The Aam Aadmi Party, the Congress and the Communist Party of India) attending to this issue as in an agenda in their 2014 Election campaign manifestos. Whereas, BJP supported the reinstatement (Vanita & Kidwai, 2000).

A lot of research has been conducted into attitudes towards homosexuality, mostly in the United States. Prior to 2004, research highlights that Americans harbored negative attitudes towards homosexuality. Though, there has been a decrease in this negativity in the recent times (American Enterprise Institute 2004). In comparison to the American population, the Canadian, British and Australian populations tend to be more accepting of homosexuality. (Mason & Barr, 2006).

Research in America provides inconsistent results. For instance, a research investigating racial differences of attitudes towards homosexuality found that white Americans have more negative attitudes towards homosexuality than do black Americans (Finlay and Walther 2003). Whereas a study done by Herek and Glunt (1993) states that black people hold more negative attitudes than white people.

A study done by Widmer and Colleagues (1998) and Kelley (2001) show that people in Netherlands are by far the most accepting of homosexuality, in which two thirds of the population doesn't consider homosexuality to be wrong at all. Reasons for this as stated by researchers include "a progressive church, a strong and long-standing gay movement, a secular population, a strong public commitment to pluralism and frank discussion of sexuality in the media" (Widmer and Colleagues 1998).

Yet the similar demographic characteristics (young, female, well-educated and less religious) have emerged to predict tolerance across nations. Research by Hinrichs & Rosenberg (2002) and Herek (2002) found that female respondents exhibit more positive attitudes towards homosexuals. A probable cause for this can be attributed to difference in gender role beliefs by the different sexes (Kite and Whitley 1996). People with more education are seen to be more accepting of homosexuality as education fosters liberal attitudes and provides greater awareness of effects of prejudice (Lewis, 2003). People who are religious (Crockett and Voas, 2003), politically conservative and less well educated (Lewis and Rogers 1999), and have authoritarian personalities and traditional gender role beliefs have more negative attitudes towards homosexuality. They are also more likely to believe that homosexuality is a choice and less likely to have had contact with gay men or lesbians. (Howard-Hassmann, 2001).

A report by Hindu newspaper highlights that the Supreme Court of India reports that India has an estimated 25 lakh of gay population (March, 2012). Whereas, according to Census report (2014) Transgender account for 4.9 Lakh of Indian Population. No account of Lesbian population has been found.

Despite such strong numbers, only 5% of heterosexual population is friendly towards them (mostly being young population) as stated by an article on Quora. The remaining either don't accept them or fake friendliness towards them.

LGBT is a relatively new research topic in India. Nonetheless, it has generated a large amount of research (mostly, qualitative research) in such short period of time. Most of the literature (empirical findings) centers on the negative attitude (ignorance, repulsion, non-acceptance) of the LGBT community, especially homosexuals and a fairly small amount reports positive image (most of which are newspaper articles or blogs).

One such study was done by Anuradha Parasar on second year students of National Law University, Jodhpur which highlights that Indians are not ignorant of homosexual marriages yet still have reservations regarding it, especially when concerned with close relatives. Similar insight was provided by Kalra, Gupta and Bhugara (2012) which states that a lot of religious and community leaders reflect anti-homosexual attitudes. Authors, Narrain and Chandran (2012), also reflect on the anti-homosexual prejudice prevailing in India. Another study done by Srivastava & Singh (2015) includes interviews from 24 heterosexuals. Most of them were not comfortable discussing about homosexuality and also exhibited more negative responses towards having a homosexual relative. Other instances of showing mild homophobic attitudes (fear and disgust) are also stated. They also interviewed 34 self-identified homosexual individuals, 15 Lesbian and 19 Gay with an age range of 17-42 years. The interviews focused on the negative treatment in workplaces, and among family members. Most of them said that parental pressure or rejection is what made them stay closeted. On the whole, the study concluded that "One of the major factors which are important for the existence of stigma is parental reaction towards homosexuality." Another cause for non-acceptance of homosexuality is due to inadequate knowledge about the community. Banwari et al. (2015) found that "Medical students and interns had inadequate knowledge about homosexuality." Interestingly, most preferred to keep a neutral stance on the topic. The researchers state that "Knowledge emerged as the most significant predictor of attitude; those having higher knowledge had more positive attitudes." The non-acceptance of homosexuality is further escalated by the reports that Indian Psychiatrists are using aversion therapy to "treat" homosexuality or change deviant sexual orientation. People actively approached mental health professionals to help change self's or relative's

sexuality. One of the cause for seeking professional help is the societal conforming to marrying. This was the case in the qualitative study done by Pradhan, Ayyar, & Bagadia (1982). This was a study of 13 males who came to psychiatrists.

Transgender community is referred as *Hijras* in India. Though the word reflects to the western concept of "Eunuchs", people in India accord it with impotency. Such open mockery is quite evident in day-to-day life of Indians and gravely affects the well being of transgender community in India, as stated in the study "*Third gender: a qualitative study of the experience of individuals who identify as being neither man nor woman*".

Furthermore, the popular media has been notorious for portraying Third gender in Comical roles or subordinate or minor roles which often hint upon mockery. This is discussed in papers by Jhimli Bhattacharjee (2014) namely "*Third Gender In Indian Films With A Special Reflection On chitrangada*". Similarly, Sabharwal & Sen (2012) also reflect on "Portrayal of Sexual minorities in Hindi Films". But there have been claims of more acceptance of LGBT community into the mainstream by Indian population with progression of time. It is quite evident with more active portrayal of the issue, and with the Gay Pride Movement in metropolitan cities, support has started generating from different corners of the world. Furthermore, bringing companies such as Accenture, Google, Infosys and IBM are actively arranging seminars and addressing the topic. A silver lining was also seen in the study done by Singh and Srivasta (2015), where the heterosexuals report being tolerant towards the LGBT community and would even try to be friends with them. Also in the study done by Banwari et al.(2015), females (medical students or interns) exhibited more positive attitudes towards homosexuality. For transgender, the ray of hope is brighter. In 2014, the Supreme Court recognized Transgender as the *Third Gender* and granted them legal rights over education, and employment. It also meant that they can have passports and licenses. The apex court also expressed concerns over the discrimination and mistreatment faced by the community, especially by law enforcers (Article from The times of India, 2014). In 2009, the transgender community got an opportunity to choose the option of "other" on ballot form. This reflects an evolvement of more empathetic approach towards the community. Since then, the internet has been flooding with the success stories of Third Genders. Some such are cases reported by India today include Shabnam "Mausi" Bano (MLA), Manabi Bandopadhyay (college principal), **Kalki Subramaniam (entrepreneur)** , Padmini Prakash (news anchor), Kamla Jain (mayor) and Laxmi Narayan Tripath (right activist) and many more.

There has been very little research done, at international as well as national level, on attitudes of heterosexual individuals towards bisexuals. The majority

of the literature combines attitudes towards bisexual men and women with those of homosexuals (Herek, 2002). The little research that has been conducted suggests that negative attitudes towards bisexuals is a widespread phenomenon, correlated with negative attitudes towards gay men and lesbians and predicted by the same variables (Eliason 1997; Herek 2002b; Mulick and Wright 2002). However, heterosexuals appear to exhibit more negative responses and attitudes towards bisexuals than homosexuals (Herek 2002b).

Review suggested that differences on Attitudes of Heterosexuals towards LGBT exist (Eg. Herek & Glunt, 1993; Kelly, 2001; Lewis, 2003). But very little research has been done in the Indian context across age groups. The present study was conducted to study the attitudes of three age groups in metropolitan setting of Delhi and NCR. Non-directional hypothesis was proposed stating that there would be significant difference in attitudes of the three age groups towards LGBT community on all dimensions. The participants were also encouraged to suggest solutions to improve acceptance of LGBT community by the heterosexual people in the qualitative interviews.

Method

Participants

The design of the study was cross-sectional. A convenience sample of 180 urban Indian males and females from Delhi and national capital region were taken. They belonged to three different age groups- 60 young adults (18-35 years of age), 60 middle-aged adults (35-55 years of age) and 60 old adults (55+ years of age). The sample consisted of 30 males and 30 females for each age group.

Measures

The attitudes of Heterosexuals towards LGBT community were assessed using quantitative and qualitative measures. The quantitative measures included the Riddle Scale (Riddle, 1973) and Lesbians, Gays and Bisexual Knowledge and Attitude Scale for Heterosexuals (LGB-KASH). Whereas the qualitative data was obtained using a self constructed semi-structured interview scale containing 10 questions. The quantitative measures were administered to all the 180 participants whereas the interview was conducted with 15 participants.

The Riddle Scale was developed by Dorothy Riddle (1973-74) which measures the degree to which an individual is homophobic or not. The scale has been used informally in workshops and wasn't published formally. It

has been cited in literature as either an unpublished conference presentation from 1985 (Riddle, 1985) or as an article from 1994 (Riddle, 1994). The scale measure either dimension on a Likert scale. The eight dimensions are: Repulsion, Pity, Tolerance, Acceptance, Support, Admiration, Appreciation and Nurturance. Tucker and Potocky (2006) report that Riddle Scale has been considered to have acceptable face validity but its exact psychometric properties are unknown.

Lesbians, Gays and Bisexual Knowledge and Attitude Scale for Heterosexuals (LGB-KASH) (Worthington, Dillon and Schutte, 2005) measures heterosexuals' attitudes towards LGB on 5 dimensions namely, Hate; Knowledge of LGB History, Symbols and Community; LBG Civil Rights; Religious Conflict; and Internalized Affirmativeness. Worthington, Dillon and Schutte (2005) analyzed the psychometric properties of LGB-KASH with acceptable reliability and convergent validity.

Procedure

Both the scales were administered to the participants. The data collection was scheduled according to the convenience of the participants, at their residence. 15 participants were also interviewed regarding their attitudes towards LGBT community using a semi-structure interview schedule. The respondents were encouraged to share their subjective experiences related to the phenomenon. They were also encouraged to suggest solutions towards improving acceptance of LGBT community by the heterosexual population. Each session lasted for an hour and a half. Ethical norms were followed including informed consent, confidentiality, right to withdraw, and debriefing in all the cases.

Means and Standard Deviations were calculated for LGB-KASH for all the three age groups. Frequencies and percentages for all dimensions of Riddle Scale were also calculated for all the three age groups. In order to test the significance of difference between the means, one-way between subjects ANOVA was carried out using SPSS Version 22.0. Post-hoc analysis was done using the Tukey HSD (King & Minium, 2007). The interview transcripts of the participants were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braune and Clark, 2006).

Results

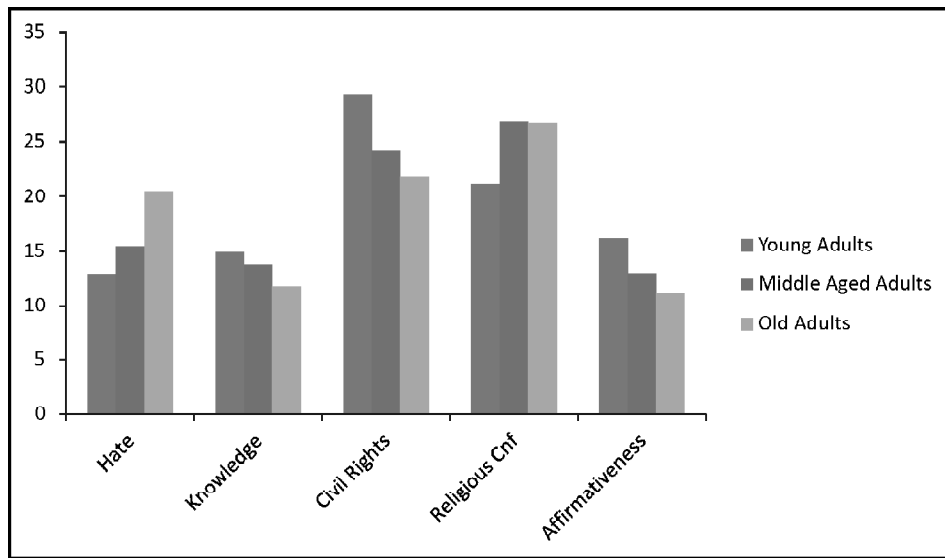
Results are reported in three sections:

Comparison between Young Adult, Middle Adult and Old Adult on Attitudes towards LGBT community on LGB-KASH.

Table 1
Attitudes of Young Adults, Middle-Aged Adults, and Old Adults towards LGBT Community on LBG-KASH Scale

	Young Adults	Middle Adults	Older Adults	F	p
Hate	12.8 ^a (6.87)	15.1 ^a (7.32)	20.6 ^b (8.4)	16.72	.000
Knowledge of LGB	14.9 ^a (9.32)	13.6 (6.33)	11.7 ^b (6.16)	2.92	.056
LGB Civil Rights	29.4 ^a (6.19)	24.1 ^b (7.53)	21.9 ^b (7.61)	17.6	.000
Religious Conflict	21.2 ^a (8.12)	26.7 ^b (7.58)	26.6 ^b (5.93)	11.13	.000
Internalized Affirmativeness	16.2 ^a (7.45)	12.9 ^b (7.38)	11.3 ^b (5.86)	7.54	.001

Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means. Means with differing superscripts within rows are significantly different at the $p \leq .05$ based on the Tukey HSD post hoc paired comparisons.



Graph 1: Attitudes of Young Adults, Middle-Aged Adults, and Old Adults towards LGBT Community on LBG-KASH Scale

Table 1 indicates that there was a significant difference on Hate $F(df= 2, 976.32) = 16.725, p=.000$. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that mean score for old adults ($M=20.6, SD=8.4$) was significantly higher than young adults ($M=12.8, SD=6.87$) for the Hate dimension. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle-age adults ($M=15.1, SD=7.32$)

and old adults. However there was no significant difference between young and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that old adults tend to be highest on hate dimension followed by middle-aged and young adults.

Table 1 also indicates that there was a significant difference on Knowledge of LGB history, symbol and community $F(df=2, 163.217) = 2.921, p=.056$. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that mean score for young adults ($M=14.9, SD=9.32$) was significantly higher than old adults ($M=11.7, SD=6.16$) for the Knowledge of LGB history, symbol and community dimension. However, there was no significant difference between middle-aged adults ($M=13.4, SD=6.33$) and old adults. There was also no significant difference between young and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that young adults tend to be highest on Knowledge of LGB history, symbol and community dimension followed by middle and old adults.

Table 1 also indicates that there was a significant difference on LGB civil rights $F(df=2, 899.239) = 17.598, p=.000$. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that mean score for young adults ($M=29.4, SD=6.19$) was significantly higher than old adults ($M=21.9, SD=7.61$) for LGB Civil rights dimension. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle-aged adults ($M=24.1, SD=7.53$) and young adults. However, there was no significant difference between old and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that young adults tend to be highest on LGB Civil Rights dimension followed by middle-aged and young adults.

Table 1 also indicates that there was a significant difference on Religious Conflict $F(df=2, 597.76) = 11.128, p=.000$. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that mean score for old adults ($M=26.6, SD=5.93$) was significantly higher than young adults ($M=21.2, SD=8.12$) for the Religious Conflict dimension. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle adults ($M=26.7, SD=7.58$) and young adults. However there was no significant difference between old and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that old adults tend to be highest on Religious Conflict dimension followed by middle and young adults.

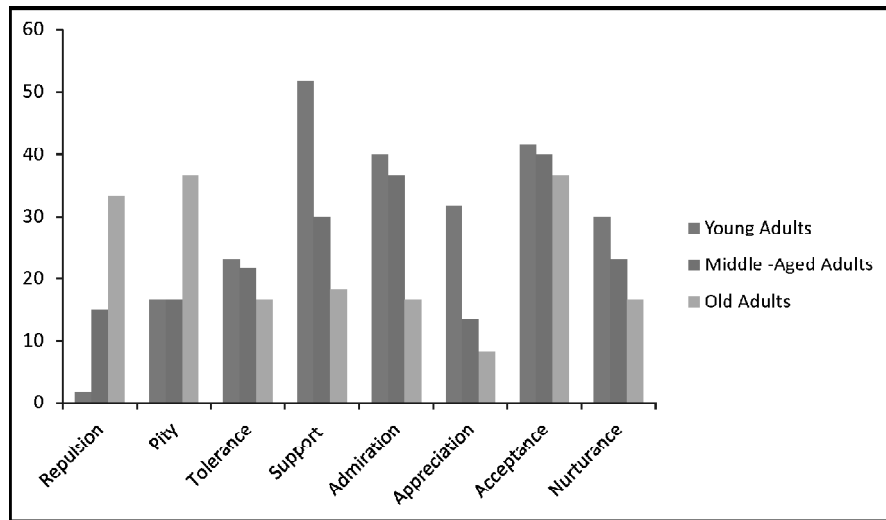
Table 1 also indicates that there was a significant difference on Internalized Affirmativeness $F(df=2, 369.156) = 7.540, p=.001$. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that mean score for young adults ($M=16.2, SD=7.45$) was significantly higher than old adults ($M=11.3, SD=5.86$) for the Internalized Affirmativeness dimension. Similarly, there was a significant difference between young adults and middle-aged adults ($M=12.9, SD=7.38$). However there was no significant difference between old and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that young

adults tend to be highest on Internalized Affirmativeness dimension followed by middle-aged and old adults.

Comparison between Young Adult, Middle-Aged Adult and Old Adult on Attitudes towards LGBT community on Riddle Scale

Table 2
Attitudes of Young Adults, Middle-Aged Adults, and Old Adults towards LGBT Community on Riddle Scale

	Young Adults	Middle-Aged Adult	Old Adults
Repulsion	1 (1.67%)	9 (15%)	20 (33.3%)
Pity	10 (16.67%)	10 (16.67%)	22 (36.67%)
Tolerance	14 (23.33%)	13 (21.67%)	10 (16.67%)
Support	31 (51.67%)	18 (30%)	11 (18.33%)
Admiration	24 (40%)	22 (36.67%)	10 (16.67%)
Appreciation	19 (31.67%)	8 (13.33%)	5 (8.33%)
Acceptance	25 (41.67%)	24 (40%)	22 (36.67%)
Nurturance	18 (30%)	14 (23.33%)	10 (16.67%)



Graph 2: Attitudes of Young Adults, Middle-Aged Adults, and Old Adults towards LGBT Community on Riddle Scale

Table 2 indicates that least number of young adults (1.67%) express repulsion towards LGBT community followed by middle-aged adults (15%) and old adults (33.33%). It also indicates that on dimension of pity maximum percentage (36.67%) old adults followed by (16.67%) young adults and same percentage of middle-aged adults expressed pity. As far as tolerance is concerned 23.33% of young adults followed by 21.67% middle-aged adults and 16.67% of old adults expressed it. On the dimension of support maximum number young adults (51.67%) expressed support followed by middle-aged (30%) adults and old adults(28.33%). As far as admiration is concerned least number of old adults (16.67%) expressed admiration followed by middle-aged adults (36.67%) and young adults(40%). Very similar results were observed as far as dimension of appreciation with 31.67% young adults followed by 13.33% middle-aged adults and 8.33% old adults expressed appreciation. 41.67% of young adults, 40% middle-aged adults and 36.67% old adults chose attitude of acceptance towards LGBT community. On the dimension of nurturance maximum number of young adults (30%) followed by middle-aged adults (23.33%) and old adults (16.67%) expressed nurturance.

Qualitative Themes

The thematic analysis of the interview transcripts generated themes namely- Awareness about LGBT Community, Morality and LGBT Community, LGBT Community and Mental Illness, Empathy and Sympathy towards LGBT Community, Rights and Privileges of LGBT Community, Support to LGBT Community by Heterosexual People, Struggles of LGBT, Public Display of Sexual Preference by LGBT Community and LGBT Person as a Relative and Suggestions for Improvement of Attitudes of Heterosexual People towards LGBT Community. These themes have been discussed in detail the discussion section.

Discussion

This section presents findings obtained from quantitative data analysis supplemented by thematic analysis of the interviews of the participants.

It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between participants on hate dimension. The result supports the hypothesis as hate was found to differ across age groups. Hate was highest among old adults and lowest among young adults. There was no significant difference between young and middle-aged adults on the hate dimension. These results suggest that old adults tend to be highest on hate dimension followed by middle-aged and young adults. Most of the research conducted with adult samples suggests that older people are more prejudiced towards gay men and lesbians than are younger people (Haeberle 1999; Herek and Glunt 1993; Kelley 2001;

Lewis 2003). This is attributed primarily to a liberal cohort effect, that is, each generation being more tolerant than the last, rather than to the 'effect of age' (Crockett and Voas 2003; Kelley 2001; Lewis 2003; Lewis and Rogers 1999). However, age does not always have a linear effect on attitudes (Lewis and Rogers 1999).

It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between participants on knowledge of LGB history, symbols and community dimension. The result supports the hypothesis as knowledge of LGB history, symbols and community was found to differ across age groups. Knowledge of LGB history, symbols and community was significantly higher among young adults compared to old adults. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle-aged adults and old adults. However, there was no significant difference between young and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that young adults tend to be highest on Knowledge of LGB history, symbol and community followed by middle-aged and old adults. Education fosters liberal attitudes, gives individuals the ability to think critically, the opportunity to interact with a diverse range of people and a greater awareness of the negative effects of prejudice (Lewis 2003; Lewis and Rogers 1999; Lottes and Kuriloff 1994; Schellenberg et al 1999). DeJowski (1992) and Loftus (2001) have shown that some of the shifts in attitudes towards homosexuality can be attributed to two factors. The first is demographic change, particularly the growth of a more educated population. The second is cultural ideological change, in particular the decreasing willingness to restrict the civil liberties of all unpopular groups. It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between participants on LGB civil rights. The result supports the hypothesis as LGB civil rights was found to differ across age groups. Support for LGB civil rights was significantly higher among young adults compared to old adults. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle-aged adults and young adults. However, there was no significant difference between old and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that young adults tend to be highest on support of LGB Civil Rights followed by middle-aged and young adults. Heterosexuals tend to be significantly more supportive of gay and lesbian civil rights than they accept homosexual behavior (Bernstein and Kostelac 2002; Klamen et al 1999; Loftus 2001; Smith 1992; Yang 1997: 477). Heterosexuals may believe, in accordance with their political or social values, that gay men and lesbians are entitled to equal rights (for example, equal employment opportunities) and yet may still feel uncomfortable with homosexual persons and behavior (Altemeyer 2001; Davies 2004; Hudson and Ricketts 1980; Kite and Whitley 1998; LaMar and Kite 1998; Loftus 2001; Logan 1996; Norris 1992; Van de Ven 1994).

It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between participants on internal affirmativeness. The result supports the hypothesis as internal affirmativeness was found to differ across age groups. Internal affirmativeness was significantly higher among young adults compared to old adults. Similarly, there was a significant difference between middle-aged adults and young adults. However there was no significant difference between old and middle-aged adults. Taken together, these results suggest that old adults tend to be highest on internal affirmativeness followed by middle-aged and young adults.

The Riddle Scale

As far as riddle scale is concerned on almost all dimensions namely- repulsion, pity, tolerance, support, admiration, appreciation, acceptance and nurturance young adults expressed positive attitudes towards LGBT community. This was in conjunction with previous research conducted all over the world. Most of the research conducted with adult samples suggests that older people are more prejudiced towards gay men and lesbians than are younger people (Haeberle 1999; Herek and Glunt 1993; Kelley 2001; Lewis 2003). This is attributed primarily to a liberal cohort effect, that is, each generation being more tolerant than the last, rather than to the 'conservatising effect of age' (Crockett and Voas 2003; Kelley 2001; Lewis 2003; Lewis and Rogers 1999).

Qualitative Analysis

Awareness about LGBT Community

As far as qualitative analysis was concerned, the first question was about what was the meaning of LGBT community. All the young adults were familiar with the meaning of the term LGBT community. This can be attributed to the technological changes and a globalized world order where young people are exposed to the internet and accessing information about different cultures, countries and way of life become much easier. Similar, awareness was observed in the middle-aged adults but some of the old people were not aware of the meaning of LGBT community. They were explained in detail the meaning of the term and only then was the further interview continued.

Morality and LGBT Community

Most of the young people expressed very strongly that question of LGBT way of life being immoral does not arise as it was a matter of personal choice which was not harming anyone and it was involvement of two consenting adults. As Y1 shared in the excerpt, "No, I don't think so because each one of us has the right to choose what they want in their life. They choose to be

homosexuals so that's their decision. They feel comfortable and we should appreciate that." Most of the middle-aged adults also expressed similar opinions. Some of the old adults also expressed that practicing LGBT way of life was not morally wrong. But some of the other old adults had major reservations as depicted by the excerpt by O4, "Yes it is unnatural. Because both partners are of the same sex and that is not how it should be."

LGBT Community and Mental Illness

Most of the young people found the idea that LGBT are mentally ill found the idea ridiculous. This was very eloquently expressed by Y3- "No, it is ridiculous to think that LGBT community is psychologically ill in any way." But mixed opinions were expressed by middle-aged adults as illustrated in the excerpt that follows, by M4- "No, all are not ill. But some are definitely ill. They don't understand what they want. But who are not ill, they are comfortable with this."

Empathy and Sympathy towards LGBT Community

Young adults were very empathetic towards LGBT community. It is very well represented by the responses like, by Y4- "I don't have sympathetic feelings for LGBT because they are just like all of us. However, I feel like supporting them for their position in this society. I also feel that they must be entitled to all the civil rights like any other citizen" and Y6- "I support all the communities. I never thought about them in negative way. Just they are portrayed in a very stereotypical way in the media." Middle-aged participants were also largely empathetic towards LGBT community as stated by M6- "I would accept them. They are humans too." Old adults expressed mixed feelings, some being neutral, others disapproving and some sympathetic. One old age participant O7 said, "I personally don't like LGBT people but I would like them to stand for their rights."

Rights and Privileges of LGBT Community

As far as rights and privileges are concerned, across age groups participants were very supportive of the idea that LGBT community should be given equal rights and privileges like their heterosexual counterparts. This was expressed very strongly by all age groups as shown by this excerpt of O1- "Yes, they deserve the same rights and privileges as everybody does for the basic reason that they are human beings too."

Struggles of LGBT Community

Across age groups there was an understanding that LGBT community have to face a lot of struggle in the society they live in, due non-acceptance and

unequal legal rights. All the age groups stated a number of struggles for instance old adult, O8 stated, "Violence, inequality, homophobia, marriage difficulties, homelessness, health and justice problems" and M3 stated, "It is seen as a taboo, unnatural and criminal by a large part of society. They face non-acceptance, and are looked down upon."

Support to LGBT Community by Heterosexual people

Young adults were confident that they would extend support to the LGBT community. Y9 said, "If the need arises then definitely" and Y1 also said, "Yes, definitely, I will." Middle-aged participants expressed mixed opinions like stated by M1-"If required, yes but may not voluntarily go to support this cause" and M9 stated "Fifty-fifty." Most of the old adults were not in favour of supporting LGBT community like stated by O10-"No, I won't. I don't support the idea of homosexuality."

Public Display of Sexual Preference and LGBT community

Most of the young people were approving of the public display of sexual preference by the LGBT community. Y3 said, "No, I would not get uncomfortable. I mean I am ok if they openly admit to it, but nothing more." Middle-aged participants were also largely comfortable with the idea of public display as was stated by M8 "Yes, I would be fine with it but it will depend on the situation." Old adults were mostly uncomfortable with the idea of public display of sexual preference as depicted by O6 "Yes I will get uncomfortable as they should do whatever they like in their bedrooms because in India we are not very open till now."

LGBT person as a relative

In conjunction with the previous themes, the younger people were more accepting of a LGBT relative compared to other age groups. This is expressed well Y4- "If he/she is interested then I am ok with it. But firstly I would suggest him/her to ask the person who he/she likes, if they both are happy then I will support them definitely." Middle-aged people were reluctant in accepting the relative but would eventually accept them. It is well depicted by the answer given by M7-"Yes I will get a shock. Then I will talk to the son and if he does not understand I will send him for treatment to help him to change his sexual orientation. But if this doesn't work I will accept him because I don't have another choice." Old adults were completely non-accepting of LGBT person as a relative as stated by O5, "I would not approve of it. I would tell my son that it is unnatural as he should not do it."

Suggestions

Very few people volunteered to suggest solutions to improve the attitudes of heterosexual people towards LGBT community. Y6 said that increasing awareness and interaction will help. O9 stated that decriminalizing homosexual behaviour and giving equal opportunities to LGBT community like school and college admissions and jobs would also help. M5 pointed out to the positive role that media and famous personalities can play in furthering the cause of LGBT community.

Conclusion

The study clearly establishes that attitudes towards LGBT community vary across the three age groups with young adults holding the most positive attitudes followed by middle-aged and old adults. Though, all the age groups believed in equal rights and privileges for LGBT community but old adults were completely non-accepting of a LGBT relative. It was also observed that some old adults were not even aware of the concept. Though, very few participants volunteered any suggestions for improvement of attitudes of heterosexual persons towards LGBT community some useful suggestions came up like increasing awareness and interaction, decriminalization of homosexuality, equal rights privileges, educational and job opportunities for LGBT and positive role of media and famous personalities.

Some of the limitations of the present study included that this study was conducted in a metropolitan setting and hence the findings cannot be generalized to rural and small town settings. The terms of "LGBT" are vaguely understood by the Indian population wherein Gays or transgender are considered to be impotent males who could not fulfill the obligations of their respective sexes and henceforth, have changed their sexual orientation. Another potential limitation is the diversity of measures used to assess attitudes towards homosexuality. These variations make it difficult to make comparisons both over time and across populations. For instance, in LGB_KASH, The subscale measuring LGB history uses terms such as pink flag, Stonewall Riot etc, which the Indian population is not aware of. There was a need to translate some statements while dealing with older participants. Translation might have changed the meaning of the original sentence. Thus, there is a need to have a test that is more representative of Indian population. The current study is not a longitudinal study. So, the researchers were not able to assess how attitudes changed over time. There is a lot of scope of further research in this area where researcher can look at gender differences. Longitudinal studies can be conducted to study attitude change in different set up like small town and rural setting. New scales suitable to Indian context can be constructed.

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