



## **SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OF HOMOSEXUALS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND ADULTS.**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the study is to find out the support for in support for gay and lesbian human rights among undergraduate students and adults. Convenient sampling method was adopted. support for Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Scale(SLGHR) (Ellis, 2003) was administrated to 60 participants. The obtained result was analyzed using, independent t-test. The results obtained showed that the support for gay and lesbian human rights is significantly higher among undergraduate students than old adults.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Homophobia and disregard of rights of homosexuals are vastly discussed at present. More and more countries including India are decriminalizing homosexuality. They are exposed various kinds of discrimination including discriminated against in education, health care and employment, they are often targeted for extreme violence and physical harmings like beaten, sexually assaulted, torturing and even killed. Therefore it is relevant to study the attitude toward homosexuals by measuring peoples support for gay and lesbian human rights.

### **Human rights**

The term Human Rights is a dynamic concept. These rights may be called the basic rights, the fundamental rights, the natural rights or the inherent rights. The principal objective of both Indian and international laws is to protect the human personality and its fundamental rights.

Human Rights is aimed at preserving the dignity of the people. Although human rights are necessary for sustaining human life and promoting development of man yet the internal political structure, levels of social technological and economic development, the resource-base and the religion-cultural background of the countries, do have a profound bearing on the policies and priorities of various countries towards human rights.

Human Rights are the rights, which every individual must have against the state of other public authority by virtue of being a member of the human family irrespective of any other consideration. These are rights which are inherent in all citizens, because of their being human.

However, in India under the Protection of Human Rights 1993 (No. 10 of 1994)§, the Human Rights have been defined in the following way: 2 (1) d) Human rights| means the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India. India has also enacted the protection of Human Rights Act in 1993 and also constituted the National Human Rights Commission, the State Human Rights Commission in different States and Human Right Courts .All citizens are entitled to enjoy the privilege of human rights.

Rights of homosexuals were been denied for decades. Section 377 of the Indian Penal code said homosexuality as Unnatural offences, whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with 2 [imprisonment for life], or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine. Explanation. Penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offence described in this section. On 6th September 2018, Five Judge Bench has declared Section 377 IPC unconstitutional, in so far as it criminalises consensual sexual acts of adults in private. "*Section 377 is irrational, indefensible and arbitrary. The majoritarian views and popular morality cannot dictate constitutional rights*".



## Homosexuals

Homosexuality has been around for a long time. But just because something has been around for a while, does not mean it has always been viewed the same way. This is best explained by the etymology and definition of the word homosexuality. Homosexuality is a type of sexual orientation characterized by sexual desire or romantic love exclusively or almost exclusively for people who are identified as being of the same sex. People who are homosexual, particularly males, are also known as 'gay' and female homosexuals are known as 'lesbians'. It can also be defined as sexual relations with another of the same sex regardless of one's sexual

Before getting into the history, we have to define what we are talking about. Homosexuality is defined as same-sex attraction; meaning the physical, emotional, and psychological attraction to persons of the same sex.

Homosexuality which is an exclusive attraction to the same sex. The word 'homosexuality' is fairly modern, created in the late 19th century by a psychologist named Karoly Maria Benkert. This would make the term about 200 years old. However, in works as old as Plato's Symposium there are discussions of similar acts. The ideas and acts were not the sole propriety of literature; sexual acts between the same sexes were depicted in stories and artwork as well.

Homosexuality was viewed not as a choice of the person, but somehow a diseased, defective, or pathological condition. This was given a great deal of credence due to the 'scientific' nature of medicine at this time. On one hand, psychiatrists and doctors campaigned for repeal or a reduction in the criminalization of the homosexual act. On the other, therapies were being developed to 'rehabilitate' the ill individual. Hanging from the other hand was the attempt at making techniques to prevent children from developing 'the homosexuality,' such as preventing childhood sexual exploration.

First published in 1968, DSM-II (the American classification of mental disorders) listed homosexuality as a mental disorder. In this, the DSM followed in a long tradition in medicine and psychiatry, which in the 19th century appropriated homosexuality from the Church and, in an élan of enlightenment, transformed it from sin to mental disorder.

In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) asked all members attending its convention to vote on whether they believed homosexuality to be a mental disorder. 5,854 psychiatrists voted to remove homosexuality from the DSM, and 3,810 to retain it.

The APA then compromised, removing homosexuality from the DSM but replacing it, in effect, with "sexual orientation disturbance" for people "in conflict with" their sexual orientation. Not until 1987 did homosexuality completely fall out of the DSM.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) only removed homosexuality from its ICD classification with the publication of ICD-10 in 1992, although ICD-10 still carries the construct of "ego-dystonic sexual orientation". In this condition, the person is not in doubt about his or her sexual preference, but "wishes it were different because of associated psychological and behavioural disorders".

## Legal status of same-sex relationships

The legal status of people in same-sex relationships depends very much on where they live. At one end of the spectrum there are those countries that punish homosexuality with the death penalty - Iran, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen - as well as in parts of Nigeria and Somalia. At the other end, there are those countries where gay couples have the same marriage rights as heterosexual couples.

Some states have conflicting laws on same-sex relationships, simultaneously having laws that punish and protect, while other countries have different laws in different regions. Attitude towards homosexuality has been various in accordance to type of societies, cultural and moral development or political situation. Stereotypes, as a special kind of cognitive schemes are developed through the



social inheritance, which means that they are passed on through the socialization as prepared trait's collections, which are connected with particular category of people. The point of stereotype's acquisition is that the information about stigmatized group is accompanied by negative affect passed on in a nonverbal way. The child very quickly associates the category of gay or lesbian with the atmosphere of outrage and disgust, and consequently learns how to react to this category with the same emotions as parents do. The lack of acceptance toward homosexuals is often just an expression of dislike to minority groups, to anyone who is different or to any opinion that is dissimilar.

The acceptance of homosexuality has improved today, however, heterosexuality is still viewed as the normative, and homosexuality as the deviant sexual orientation. Stigma refers to an enduring condition or attribute, a physical or figurative mark borne by an individual; the attribute or mark is not inherently meaningful; meanings are attached to it through social interaction. The meaning attached to the mark by the larger group or society involves a negative valuation. The attribute is understood by all to signify that its bearer is a criminal, villain, or otherwise deserving of social ostracism, infamy, shame, and condemnation. Thus, the stigmatized are not simply different from others; society judges their deviation to be discrediting. Individual members of society may vary in how they personally respond to a particular stigma, but everyone shares the knowledge that the mark is negatively valued.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study Population

The participants of the study consisted of 30 undergraduates and 30 adults having adequate reading and writing skills in English. The undergraduate students were in the age group of 18-22 and adults were above 40-55.

### Tools used

#### 1.Socio demographic Details:

This socio demographic data is intended to gather information regarding the name of the participant, gender, age and education.

#### 2. Support for Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Scale (SLGHR)

The Support for Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Scale (SLGHR) is a 25 item Likert-type scale ranging from 1-5 with total scores ranging from 15 to 125. This scale measures the individuals' support for human rights in relation to gay and lesbian issues. Ellis, Kitzing, & Wilkinson (1999) developed this test.

### Statistical Analysis

For the present study, to find out support for human rights of homosexuals among undergraduate students and adults, independent samples t-test was applied.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was designed to study about the support for human rights of homosexuals among undergraduates and adults.

**Table 1** Mean, standard deviation and t-value results comparing under graduates and adults in their support for human rights of homosexuals.

	Gender	Mean	SD	Df	t	P
SLGHR	Undergraduate student	53.17	12.219	58	6.134	.000
	Adults	77.37	17.822	58		



An independent samples t-test was conducted to find the difference in support for gay and lesbian human rights among undergraduate students and adults. Table 1 shows the results of the analysis. There was a significant difference among the undergraduate students  $(M=53.17, SD=12.217)$  and adults  $(M=77.37, SD=17.822)$ ; Therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is a no significant difference in the support for human rights of homosexuals among under graduate students and adults, is rejected.

There can be a numerous reasons for why undergraduate students have significantly higher support for human rights of homosexuals when compared to older population. Minority groups like homosexuals and transgender started getting visibility in our society only recently. Decriminalization of homosexuality and pride rallies have played crucial role in this .hence the current undergraduate student population can be having a much more positive perspective towards such groups . It was noted during data collection ,that the older adults' totally agreed to item number 14 which says that a primary school teacher should not be allowed to continue teaching ,if discovered to be lesbian or gay. This is particularly interesting, that given item number 14 is one of the few items in the questionnaire where there is a real life situation that the participant can imagine. This change of attitude and consideration of human rights of homosexuals can be considered as a positive sign that our society is becoming more open minded and inclusive.

## CONCLUSION

From the findings it was concluded that the support for gay and lesbian human rights is significantly higher among undergraduate students than oldie adults.

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