Attitudes Toward Homosexuality, Self Righteousness And Conformity Among Emerging Adults

Jeeva Ninan[1], Feliza Sabu[2], Annu Ann Abraham[3], Needhumol Thomas[4], Krupa Dinah Mathews[5]

[1,2,3,4]*PG-MSc Psychology, Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology, Changanassery, Kottayam, Kerala.*
[5]*Assistant Professor, Post Graduate Department of Psychology, Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology, Changanassery, Kottayam, Kerala.*

Abstract
The desire between individuals of the same sex is referred to as homosexuality. Rather than being a gender identity like male, female, or nonbinary, it is a sexual orientation. Homosexuality can be influenced by changing one's attitudes and beliefs to more closely resemble the groups that one already belongs to or wishes to join and this is called social conformity. Being convinced of one's own justification, and morality, especially in contrast to the deeds and viewpoints of others, is self-righteousness. The study's objective was to examine the attitudes toward homosexuality, self -righteousness, and conformity and whether there is any significant relation among them. 65 emerging adults of age 18 to 26 made up the sample, which include both males and females. This sample was collected through the Convenience sampling method. Tools used were Self Righteousness Scale (SRS), Homosexuality Attitude Scale (HAS), and Conformity Scale (CS). Using SPSS, statistical analysis was conducted. The data was examined using Spearman's correlation test. According to the research, there is a substantial positive correlation between attitudes towards homosexuality and conformity as well as between those attitudes and self-righteousness and its subscale self-righteousness.
Keywords: Homosexuality, Self-righteousness, Conformity

Introduction
The term "emerging adulthood" refers to the era of development between the ages of 18 to 26, but it can extend into one's late 20s and early 30s. Jeffrey Jensen Arnett provided the first definition of it. Emerging adulthood can be defined as the time when people experiment with their identities, notably in terms of love and career. Young adulthood is a time when many potential futures still exist, and very little about a person's life path has been firmly established. This generation tends to have high hopes and high expectations because so few of their aspirations have been tested in the fires of real life. They may not yet have a stable job or a stable relationship, but they are usually no longer financially dependent on their parents. They focus on themselves as they gain the skills, knowledge, and awareness of themselves they must acquire for their adulthood.

Sexual orientation has been suggested as a complex combination of biological, hormonal, and ecological variables. Research suggests that sexual orientation; including homosexuality is determined by a combination of genetic and biological factors, along with various social and environmental influences. Over time and across cultural boundaries, attitudes towards gay behavior have changed regarding acceptability, tolerance, retribution, and outright ban. In classical Greece and Rome, homosexuality was common. In part because of increased political engagement and attempts by homosexuals to present themselves as "normal" persons who only differ from "normal" people in terms of their sexual orientation, society's image of homosexuality is changing.

Changing one's attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, or perceptions to more closely resemble the groups one already belongs to or wishes to join is referred to as social conformity.In order to fit in with a certain group, one may agree with or imitate the majority there, or one may modify some behaviors to seem "normal" to that group. In essence, conformity can be understood as giving in to peer pressure. Sometimes we follow the rules of the group to avoid looking silly or unsure of how to react in specific circumstancesWhile it might be good to fit in with the group, there are times when doing so can have unfavourable effects. For instance, if one believes they must alter their appearance or attitude to fit in, conforming to fit in may result in a loss of self-esteem. Additionally, the need to fit in might make people less open to new ideas and contradictory viewpoints. It can even encourage discriminatory attitudes and actions.

Self-righteousness is described be like "convinced of one's own righteousness, especially in contrast with the actions and beliefs of others." Sometimes self-righteousness manifests as arrogance and hypocrisy. People who are self-righteous believe their approach to be the sole right one and that they are always right. They hate anyone who doesn't agree with them or live according to their values because they think they are superior to everyone else. They lecture people in an effort to persuade them to view things their way. Being overconfident in their abilities and believing that they are the best at all they do are both signs of being self-righteous. People also decide to stand up for what they perceive to be morally just and appropriate. Respecting one's own moral standards, guiding principles and values is a necessary component of righteousness.

Social conformity and righteous beliefs can be correlated to homosexuality. Stereotypically, homosexuals are seen as breaking from our society's accepted norms for sex. Homosexuality is viewed as morally evil or as conflicting with their religious or cultural values based on conformity. They might see conformity as a means of upholding traditional values, societal cohesiveness, or religious tenets. Conformity is viewed as necessary in this situation in order to maintain the integrity of their moral or religious framework. It's common to link righteousness with inclusion, acceptance, and respecting each person's rights and dignity, regardless of their sexual orientation. They contend that morality necessitates treating everyone equally and justly. Righteousness is understood in this context as a call for social fairness and human rights.

Review of Literature

Arli, Septianto & Chowdhury (2021), conducted research on the relationship between religion and unethical behavior in the setting of consumption. In view of the connection between moral misconduct and excessive religious perspectives, this study explains when and why excessive religiosity results in wrongful evaluations. According to the results of two pieces of research, ethnocentrism both mediates (Study 1) and moderates (research one and Two) the effects of excessive religiosity on consumers' wrongful judgments. External beliefs produce racial prejudice which is the reason behind this, which in turn establishes racial prejudice as a mediator between in-group loyalty and unethical behavior of clients. At the same time, varying degrees of ethnocentrism can also affect how extrinsic religion influences self-righteousness, which supports unethical consumption, establishing ethnocentrism as a moderator. The results of this study have important ramifications for several stakeholders with an interest in consumer behavior and religion.

Collier, Bos, and Sanfort (2012) did a study on the topic of "intergroup contact, attitudes towards homosexuality, and the role of acceptance of gender non-conformity." 456 Dutch adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15 who responded to a survey and said they had no same-sex desire provided the information. In Amsterdam, the Netherlands, eight schools were the sites of data collection in 2008. The results imply that paying attention to intergroup contact as well as acceptance of gender non-conformity would improve our comprehension of adolescent attitudes towards homosexuality.

Hetzel (2011) conducted a study to examine the relationship between social conformity, gender-role equality, and an individual's level of homosexism, or prejudice towards those who identify as same-sex. The attitudinal and behavioral change of participants as well as the consistency of attitude-

behavior relationships were studied using mock public opinion polls of a favorable or negative nature regarding same-sex orientation. 194 undergraduate students from a university in the Midwest were included in the study sample. Participants' traditional views of gender roles and heterosexism were related. Participants with good attitudes towards lesbians and gay men as well as those who saw the positive public opinion poll showed behavioral support for a lesbian and homosexual organization. Results are examined in the context of social prejudice.

Herek and Rivera (2006) conducted a study they used three-item versions of the Attitudes Towards Gay Men (AGT) and Attitude Towards Lesbians (ATL) scales delivered simultaneously in Spanish and English to investigate attitudes towards lesbians and gay men in a sample of northern California adults of Mexican heritage (N=616). While females indicated more negative sentiments towards lesbians, male attitudes against homosexual men were noticeably more negative than female attitudes. Overall, those who expressed negative attitudes supported more traditional gender attitudes than those who expressed positive attitudes, tended to be older and less educated, had more children, were more likely to be members of fundamentalist religious denominations and frequent members of the church, were more conservative in their political views, and were less likely to have had direct contact with gay people. Further research found that respondents who spoke and read English (rather than Spanish) or associated with American culture (rather than Mexican culture) were more likely to have associations with education, number of children, personal interaction, and religious attendance.

Falbo and Sheppered (1986) conducted a study on "self-righteousness: cognitive, power, and religious characteristics". To further understand self-righteousness as a personality trait, a study (N = 291) was carried out. Subjects were categorized according to how confident and self-righteous they were, resulting in a typology. The group with the highest scores for perspective-taking and objectivism was found to be the Broad-Minded (low self-righteousness/high self-esteem), who also worried the least about others controlling them. Additionally, they scored highly on both the intrinsic and quest dimensions of religious inclination. Strong power techniques were preferred by the Insecure (high self-righteousness/low self-esteem), who also scored highly on the extrinsic orientation to religion. The other two personality types were less distinct from one another, with the Meek (low self-righteousness/low self-esteem) most similar to the Insecure and the Arrogant (high self-righteousness/high self-esteem) most similar to the Insecure. This means self-righteousness is a sense of moral or ethical superiority over others that characterizes the attitude or mindset known as self-righteousness. The idea that one's own deeds, principles, or ideas are fundamentally good or moral can lead to a critical and judgemental attitude toward people who do not hold similar values or uphold the same standards.

Objectives
1. To discover whether attitudes towards homosexuality and conformity among emerging adults are correlated.
2. To discover whether self-righteousness and attitudes towards homosexuality among emerging adults are correlated.

Hypotheses
1. There will be a significant relationship between attitudes toward homosexuality and conformity among emerging adults.
2. There will be a significant relationship between attitudes toward homosexuality and self-righteousness among emerging adults.
3. There will be a significant relationship between attitudes toward homosexuality and subscales of self-righteousness.
3a. Homosexuality attitude: self-righteousness
3b. Homosexuality attitude: Acceptance

Method

Participants

65 emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 25 make up the sample. Participants came from various colleges located throughout Kerala, India. Convenient sampling was applied to select the sample.

Measures

1.Homosexuality Attitude Scale (HAS)

The Homosexuality Attitude Scale (HAS) is used to measure the attitude of individuals towards homosexuality. It is a Likert scale that assesses people's stereotypes, misconceptions, and anxieties about homosexuals. The measure contains a unidimensional factor representing a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of homosexuals. It was developed by Mary E Kite and Deaux, K in the year 1986. It's a 21-item scale in which participant rate each item from 1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree.

Administration

Please indicate your level of agreement with the items below using the following scale: 1=strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= neutral, 4= disagree and 5= strongly disagree.

Scoring

The respondents were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strong agreement (5) to strong disagreement (1) with neither agreement nor disagreement - neutral at (3).
Higher scores indicated a more positive attitude towards homosexuality.

Reliability and Validity

The scale has excellent internal consistency (alphas >.92). The scale has a good test-retest reliability (r =.71). It is equally reliable for gay males and for lesbian targets. Attitude scores for "gay male", "lesbian", and "homosexual" targets do not differ significantly. However, researchers are best served by the selection of a specific target and avoiding "homosexual" as an attitude object.

The scale correlates (rs =.50) with the FEM Scale (Smith et al., 1975) and the Attitude Towards Women Scale (Spence and Helmreich, 1978). It is unrelated to the agency/communion scales of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence et al., 1974) and is unrelated to the M and F Scale of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). It is also unrelated to the Self-monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974), the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale (Crowne and Marlowe, 1960), and the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965).

2.Self-Righteousness Scale (SRS)

Self-righteousness scale was used to measure self-righteousness. It was developed by Toni Falbo. This 7-item instrument measures the conviction that one's beliefs or behavior are correct, especially in comparison to alternative beliefs or behaviors. It excludes self-righteousness about political issues and focuses not on specific beliefs but on the general characteristic of self-righteousness. The SRS is not associated with anxiety, thereby distinguishing it from similar variables such as dogmatism which assumes the presence of anxiety. Two subscales can be formed; one measuring general self-righteousness (SR) and another measuring its opposite, acceptance (A).

Administration

Answer each item according to the following scale and record your answer to the left of each statement (1=strongly agree, 2= agree, 3= neutral, 4= disagree and 5= strongly disagree).

Scoring

Each item is rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The SR items (1,2, 3, 4) are summed to form a total score ranging from 4 to 20. Items 3 and 4 are reverse-scored. Higher scores reflect more self-righteousness. Items 5, 6, and 7 are summed to obtain an acceptance score (A). Scores range from 3 to 15 with higher scores indicating more acceptance of others.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability was separately determined for the two subscales and was generally only moderate. Internal consistency using coefficient alpha was .60 and .58 for the SR and A subscales, although all items significantly correlated with subscale scores. Concurrent validity was evidenced with correlations between the SR and measures of dogmatism, and intolerance for ambiguity, and state-trait anxiety.

3. Conformity Scale (CS)

To measure the conformity in individuals the conformity scales were used. It was developed by Mehrabian and Stefl in the year 1995. It is an 11-item scale with each item scored on a nine-point scale. It assesses individuals' involving characteristic willingness to identify with others and emulate them, to give in to others to avoid conflict, and generally, to be a follower rather than a leader in terms of ideas, values, and behaviors.

Administration

Please use the following scale to indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements below. Record your numerical answer to each statement in the space provided preceding the statement. Try to describe yourself accurately and generally (that is, the way you are actually in most situations- not the way you would hope to be). (1= not at all true of me, 9= extremely true of me)

Scoring

Item scoring directions are given within parentheses following each item.

Reliability and Validity

All 11-item total correlation of the conformity scale exceeded .40 in absolute value and had a mean absolute value of .54. Additional evidence of internal consistency or homogeneity of the conformity scale was provided by an alpha reliability coefficient of .77.
The scale was considered to have an excellent validity too.

Procedure

As the initial phase of data collection, the tools for homosexuality, conformity, and self-righteousness were chosen. Emerging Adults served as the source of the samples. Age and gender were just two examples of the socio-demographic information included in the survey's initial section. The survey's confidentiality was also guaranteed to the participants. Each form indicated at the outset that participation was entirely voluntary and that refusal to participate would not result in any negative effects. After assuring them that the data will only be used for research purposes and that no information about them will be published without their permission, they gave their agreement to be a participant in the study. Before the questionnaire was administered, instructions were given. SPSS was used to gather and analyze the data. And it was evaluated in order to derive study-based conclusions.

Statistical Analysis

Using SPSS Version 28, the acquired data were examined. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is a software program widely used for statistical analysis in various fields, including social sciences, business, and healthcare. It provides a range of features and tools for data management, data transformation, statistical analysis, and data visualization.

Methods for descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the current investigation. Brief descriptive coefficients, which can represent the full population or only a sample of it, are used in descriptive statistics to summarize a particular data set. Mean and standard deviation was employed in descriptive statistics.

The area of statistics called inferential statistics is focused on leveraging the idea of probability to address uncertainty in decision-making. It describes the procedure of picking and applying a sample statistic to deduce conclusions about a population parameter from a sample of the population. Spearman's correlation and the Mann-Whitney U test are both employed in inferential statistics. When an ordinal or continuous dependent variable that is not normally distributed needs to be compared between two independent groups, the Mann-Whitney U test is utilized. The strength and

direction of the relationship between two ranked variables are quantified by Spearman's correlation coefficient.

Table 1

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient and p-value of Homosexuality attitude, Conformity and Self-righteousness

Variables	Correlation	Conformity	Self-righteousness	SR subscale	Acceptance
Homosexuality Attitude	r-value	-.359**	.265*	.448**	-.106
	p-value	.003	.033	.000	.400

**the value is significant at the 0.01 level
*the value is significant at the 0.05 level

Result

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient and p-valueof Homosexuality attitude, Conformity, and Self-righteousness. The corresponding r-value and p-value of homosexuality attitude and conformity are -.359 and .003 respectively. The value is significant at 0.01 levels. Homosexuality attitude and self-righteousness have a r-value of .265 and its corresponding p-value is .033. The value is significant at 0.05 levels. Homosexuality attitude and self-righteous subscale have a r-value of .448 and its corresponding p-value is .000. The value is significant at 0.01 level. For the variable homosexuality attitude and acceptance, the r-value is -.106 and its corresponding p-value is .400.

Discussion

The study's objective was to ascertain whether attitudes toward homosexuality, self-righteousness, and conformity among emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 29 are significantly correlated. Individuals who are emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same gender are said to have a homosexual orientation. Although there has been improvement in many areas of the world, studies have revealed that homosexuality still suffers prejudice and discrimination in many communities. It is, therefore, crucial to treat everyone with respect, decency, and empathy, regardless of their sexual orientation. The degree of societal conformity has an impact on how individuals feel about homosexuality. The act of changing one's ideas and behavior to conform to the dominant standards and expectations of a certain group or community is known as conformity. This temptation may be more compelling when we are unsure of how to respond or when there are conflicting expectations. Different factors, such as cultural standards, familial expectations, peer pressure, etc., might affect conformity. The influence of self-righteousness on gay attitudes is a significant additional component. Self-righteous individuals may exhibit a sense of moral superiority and may pass judgment on people who do not share their opinions or uphold their preconceived moral code. Having a self-righteous attitude might reveal a chance of exhibiting negative attitudes towards homosexuality.

The present study was conducted among a sample of 65 students of both males and females who come under the age group of 18-26 years. The study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between attitudes toward homosexuality, self-righteousness, and conformity and there exists a significant relationship among the attitudes towards homosexuality which is significant at 0.05 levels. The sample was collected through the Convenience sampling method and the analysis was based on Spearman's Rank Correlation. Tools used were Self Righteousness Scale (SRS), Homosexuality Attitude Scale (HAS), and

Conformity Scale (CS). The homosexuality attitude scale is a measure that contains a

unidimensional factor representing a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of homosexuals. thus through the study participant who had a favorable attitude toward homosexuality, showed less conformity and mostly scored higher for acceptance than the self-righteousness subscale. And people who had unfavorable evaluations of homosexuals scored higher for either self-righteousness or conformity.

Generally, people try to conform to the appointed group, which may or may not have a positive outlook toward homosexuality in accordance with the beliefs that the majority of group members hold. But according to the current study, it is evident that there is a significant negative correlation between attitudes toward homosexuality and conformity. This result may be due to the lower number of responses or the participants may predominantly be influenced by many other potential factors such as religious beliefs, upbringing family values, educational background, the portrayal of homosexuals in media and culture, personal experiences, traditional gender role beliefs, and personality traits, over conformity to a group to forming attitudes toward homosexuality.

There can also be seen as a positive relationship between attitudes towards homosexuality and self-righteousness. People who are self-righteous believe their approach to be the sole right one and that they are always right. The sub-scales of self-righteousness include one measuring general self-righteousness (SR) and another measuring its opposite, acceptance (A). From the result, it is understood that there is no correlation between acceptance and attitudes toward homosexuality. This proves that the participants have generally righteous attitudes towards homosexuality. self-righteousness is a psychological and moral characteristic characterized by an exaggerated sense of one's own moral superiority or correctness, which is frequently coupled with a critical viewpoint of other people. Self-righteous individuals frequently have a great impulse to force their beliefs on others and frequently feel that their behaviors, values, and beliefs are indisputable truths. A self-righteous person may have an unfavorable attitude toward homosexuality and will not be ready to accept further societies other than being male and female. There is also a possibility that these participants might possess a homophobic attitude to these communities and this may reflect in their pattern of thinking and way of behaviors.

Implications

Self-righteousness and conformity working together can have an especially powerful impact on how people feel about homosexuality. Due to their sense of moral superiority, self-righteous people may be less willing to change their attitudes, while conformity may exacerbate these unfavorable attitudes by enforcing the social group's accepted norms.

Understanding how self-righteousness and conformity affect how people feel about homosexuality can assist guide efforts to promote inclusive and welcoming cultures. To combat self-righteousness and lessen the detrimental impacts of conformity on attitudes toward homosexuality, it is important to promote open dialogue, education, exposure to various viewpoints, and empathy. Promoting LGBTQIA+ visibility and rights can also help alter attitudes for the better over time.

Through the study, we get to know more about the influencing factors that form attitudes toward homosexuality. Understanding the underlying factors will give us a clear picture of what we should work on. It is comparably easier to promote or reinforce a favorable attitude towards homosexuality in emerging adults than in older generations. Providing more exposure to homosexual individuals in social situations could form a non-biased culture that the people in such a community would consider and treat as normal. Building such social situations and creating a positive environment may help to create a positive attitude towards homosexuality in people who tend towards social conformity. Providing sexual education in the college or school systems could also be a considerable way to learn more about sexual orientations, sexual fluidity, and the LGBTQIA+ community and could address existing schemas about homosexuality, such as mental disorders. This could positively influence the younger generation to build a positive belief and value system that could also promote a favorable attitude toward such sensitive cases.

Conclusion

The study sought to determine the relationship between attitudes towards homosexuality, self-righteousness, and conformity among emerging adults. According to the results, there exists a significant positive correlation between homosexuality attitudes and self-righteousness as well as homosexuality attitudes and self-righteous subscale. From the findings, it can also be concluded that there exists a negative correlation between homosexuality attitudes and conformity.

Scope for Further Study

Suggestions that can be put forward for further research includes the following:

1. Conducting the present study with a longitudinal research design and tools will help in a better understanding in the future.
2. Incorporating qualitative research methods with quantitative methods might explore more in the area.
3. The study can be conducted in other groups across different districts and states.
4. The study can be conducted in the same group using other variables.
5. Studies can be conducted based on gender differences among others.
6. subsequent studies can use more number of samples and include more individuals in the study.

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