

Perceived Parental Reactions & Psychological Distress among Homosexuals

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Abstract

Homosexual individual has suffered long enough in the society and are still suffering physically, sexually and psychologically in every culture, in every society because of the traditional rules, cultures, superstitions, lack of social support, societal rejection, threat, bullying, discrimination, inequality in the workplace, verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse etc. But in ancient times, there were countries like Indian, Greek, and Roman, China - which totally supported homosexuality. In India, once homosexuality was accepted, but after the Mughal and British Invasion it was criminalized under section 377 of Indian Penal Code, and now it is decriminalized. But still there is a lot of taboo associated with homosexuality. The most difficult phase for homosexuals is to identify themselves as lesbian or gay and it becomes more stressful when they disclose their sexual orientation in front of their parents. Hence this research aims to focus on, - (i) to compare between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Responses & Paternal Responses, (ii) to compare between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress and, (iii) to check the correlations between Parental Responses and Psychological Distress among Homosexuals. A total 94 self-identified Homosexual individuals, aged 18 to 25 years, were selected from four major cities in Gujrat – Surat, Vadodra, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar by using Snowball Sampling technique. There were two scales – Perceived Parental Reaction Scale and Kessler Psychological Distress Scale used in this research for data collection. After collecting the data, statistical analysis has been conducted by using Independent Sample t test and Pearson Correlation test. The finding revealed that no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Reaction and Psychological Distress, though there was significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Reactions. Lastly, a strong positive correlation was found between Parental Responses and Psychological Distress among Homosexuals. The research also highlights the importance of family acceptance for promoting mental health well-being, family counselling, social awareness and supportive policies to reduce stereotypes against homosexual individuals in our society.

Keywords: Homosexual, Parental, Reaction, Distress, Victimization, Society

Introduction

“In every body resides the divine who witnesses, guides, supports and enjoys all that the body experiences” – Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 13, Verse 22

Homosexuality or homosexual behavior can be described as sexual/romantic attraction between the males (Gay) or between the females (Lesbian) or in simply way, homosexuality refers to have a sexual interest or sexual attraction towards the member of one's own sex. Homosexual refers a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex. Homosexuals mainly categorized into two types – Lesbian and Gay. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “Lesbian belonging or relating to a woman who is sexually and romantically attracted to other woman and not to people of other genders”. Gay is used to describe the male, “who are romantically or sexually attracted to the person of the same sex” (American Psychological Association, 2008), but in these days people are continuous debating about, whether Homosexuality is natural or not. This is one of the most important fact the people are concerned about. Therefore, to understand the causes of Homosexuality, one must aware regarding same sex relationships (Aldrich, 2003).

History Of Homosexuality

Nowadays we all witnessed several social movements regarding the equal rights and opportunities for same sex individuals as a reply of centuries of superstition made by religions. Almost in all country homosexual activities

were used to punish by death penalty and often those discussions were made during sensational public hearings, trials, exile, medical warnings and language from the pulpit and all those things lead toward homophobia and several discriminations (Johnson, 2004). Before scientific and political revolution of 18th and 19th centuries, people with sexual minorities had to suffer with so much of risk, violence and discrimination from the society even they were afraid to expose their identity in front of everyone, but slowly and gradually generation changed and the influence of public media and ideals of human right brought together several activists to raise their voices for homosexual individual (Bechdel, 2006). During 20th century, a movement for gay rights had been shaded by the rise of feminism and new anthropologies of difference. Around 150 years ago from today, several leaders and organizers have struggled to address their issues and risk related to their identity disclosure with gay men and lesbian women. Now the point is prehistory homosexual activism, there are lot of evidences that can prove that was a part in ancient cultures where same sex love was accepted (Bornstein, 1994). Even homosexuality was accepted in Israel though it is prohibited in Bible, meanwhile same sex relationships were flourished in Ancient Greece. Even during seventh century BCE, same sex desires was inscribed by SAPPHO, and it was expanded from Albania to Afghanistan and from Kenya to Native American. After Christianization, Western or white observers believed that homosexual practices were foreign, savage, a medical issue or evidence of a lower racial hierarchy (Bronski, 2011). While, indigenous civilizations always had an approach related to accept homosexuality than European and Christin Colonizers. During the time European Colonization, the same sex cultures of Native American, North African and Pacific Islander often shocked the European invaders who had the limited understanding of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ and slowly European invaders started to destroy the homosexuality cultures by making laws and imposing brutal punishments on homosexuals (Scholinski, 1998). There was a case study in America where a Spanish man executed a Frenchman for practicing homosexuality. During the period of emerging Christianity, same sex orientation often described as a scandal. Basically, homosexual relationships thrived only in the case of unmarried persons, unrelated males and females to mingle and socialize freely. Especially at several times relationships within women had not been scrutinized because, there was no such threat like pregnancy (Jacobs, 1997).

Even European dress code clearly separated the genders (male/female). According to the Biblical interpretations it was illegal for a woman to dress like a man and when a man adapted female dress, it was believed by the society that particular was found in their respective writings. They have mentioned the homosexuality or bisexuality can be occurred naturally. Even Sigmund Freud, never considered homosexuality is an illness or crime, instead he believed that it happened due to undetermined development in the womb (Cenziper, Obergefell, & Wins, 2016). According to the recorded history, Homosexual community has always consisted a small but a very significant cohort in the society. There were lot of evidences can be found in oldest written documents in Egypt, ancient Greece, Rome and China related to homosexuality around 4400 years back. Apart from that same sex behavior also documented in several animals such as mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. In these days same sex relationships are totally considered as illegal in many nations and if anyone is practicing homosexuality then death penalty or lifetime imprisonment can be imposed (Jacobs, 1997).

During the early days of theatres women were mainly banned from acting but, men were used to do crossdressing as a woman and then they played the roles of female actor. It eventually opened a new competition to those who belonged from Transgender community. This picture was same in Shakespeare’s theatre to Japanese Kabuki and to the Chinese opera. These arts unknowingly often accepted sanctuary for LGBT individual, who built their theatrical careers based around disguise and illusion (Faderman, 2015). The efforts of understanding same sex behavioural acts first made by Carl von Westphal in 1869, followed by Richard von Krafft-Ebing in 1882 and Havelock Ellis in the year 1897. Interestingly, sympathy towards homosexuality (Jacobs, 1997).

History Of Homosexuality In India

India’s rich cultural history is one of the greatest of mystery of all time. Because not only in Greece and Roman period, homosexuality practice was one of the common behaviors in ancient India also. All kind of love and sexual practices were acceptable in during ancient period of India. There are some Indian religious books which described about homosexual characters and themes in their text, and these books serve as evidence, that can prove that homosexuality is not a sinful practice. The Rigveda describes the phrase “Vikriti Evam Prakriti”,

means – the thing which seems unnatural is also natural (Ray, 2018). Evidence can be found in Kamasutra, the Indian Sex Book also mentioned regarding Lesbians. Lesbians were known as ‘Swarninis’, and they mostly married with each other and raised children together. As per the famous author and mythologist Kavita Kane, there is numerous Hindu text and scriptures always accepted the concept of sexuality spectrum. Hindu mythology is full up of such stories, tales and characters which fall under the category of Homosexuality (Ruth & Saleem, 2001).

The ancient Hindu culture always accepts queer behavior – either it could be cross dressing, sexual fluidity or homosexual intercourse or those are considered perfect and natural. There is ancient Hindu text such as Vedas, Epics and Puranas are contained with deities, and the characters that possessed the elements of gender variance and non-heterosexual sexuality. Changes of sex, homoerotic encounters, and intersex or third gender characters are often found in these historical narratives (Mehrotra, 2021). Apart from that there are several evidences regarding homosexual behavior found in Hindu gods. The god of fire, Agni married both to the Goddess Svaha and the male moon God Soma. Another tale is related to Mitra and Varuna; they are the gods of Intimacy mostly presiding over the universal waters. Mitra regulates the depths of the ocean while Varuna rules over the rivers and shores but according to the metaphorical point of view, these two gods are associated with two lunar phases. Mitra is the waning one and Varuna is the waxing one and they symbolized same sex relationship (Ruth & Saleem, 2001).

Anti-Homosexual Laws

Some countries are starting to accept homosexuality and starting to believe equality, while there are some countries in Asia and Africa, are having anti-gay laws, which mean homosexuality is criminalized and it will be punishable. In the year 2023, the U.S. vice president Kamala Harris visited three African countries, Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia and has drawn criticism over her support for LGBTQ community (Mena, 2022). In Ghana, she mentioned that “all people to be treated equally” and criticized a bill related to the criminalization of gay rights. Later the country’s speaker Alban Bagbin described her remarks on equality was “undemocratic” and requested law makers not to be influenced by any person. In Tanzania and in Zambia, governments are also against the protest and the movement regarding LGBT rights and have threatened to hold protest (BBC News, 2023).

According to an article by BBC, there are 64 countries present, which don’t support homosexuality at all and have prescribed punishment for engaging in such activities.

- In the year 2022, the parliament of Singapore introduced a bill which was against homosexuality and it banned sex between men (Mena, 2022).
- Later in the same year, the apex courts of Antigua and Barbuda declared that homosexuality is unconstitutional and criminalized same sex act between consenting adults (BBC News, 2019).
- The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association monitor the progress of laws regarding homosexuality around the world. There are countries such as Brunei, Iran, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Nigeria prescribed death penalty for homosexual activities (Patience, 2023).
- Apart from those countries like, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Qatar, Somalia and United Arab Emirates – has no legal clarity on homosexual activities but death penalty can be imposed as a punishment. Sudan imposed death penalty for consensual same sex activities. As per the report of UK home office, Jamaica was a homophobic country but still their authorities do not actively seek to prosecute homosexual behavior (Reid, 2015).

In recent days, Homosexuality is still remaining under the taboo in Asia, Africa and Latin America, but in Western countries the idea of Homosexuality is more liberal. In 20th century, this issue became political and there were several gay civil right movements started (Dennis & Symons, 2005). Also, North America and European countries are more aware about Gay and Lesbian communities. Many people who fall under this category, they are demanding of equal right and equal treatment in employment sectors and other societal organizations. Therefore, one can understand that the issue regarding Homosexuality is not widely but somewhat acceptable researchable topic in nowadays (Greenberg, 1988). Though public are started to open

about homosexual behavior but still one cannot ignore the fact that Homosexuals are becoming the victim of Physical Abuse, Verbal Abuse and Sexual Abuse which resulted several psychological illnesses amongst this community. Apart from the all of abuse and violence, researchers believe that they are mostly traumatized during self-identification. In recent days self-identification is also termed as - 'Come Out'. It can be considered as internal coming out, which starts from the age of puberty to the age of 40 or older (Rahman, 2019).

Parental Reactions & Psychological Distress

During the process of coming out, homosexual individuals often experience emotional conflict, fear of rejection, and feelings of social isolation. Among the different social factors associated with their mental health, parental reactions are considered to have a significant influence on their psychological well-being and emotional adjustment. Hence to explore and measure the mental health being of same sex persons this research will be focusing on the area of Parental Reactions and Psychological Impact of Homosexuals during self -Identification.

- **Parental Reactions**

Coming out or Self-identification process can be defined as the sharing of own's sexual orientation to others and it has been considered as the most essential component in lesbian and gay identity formation and integration. Perceived Parental Reaction, during self-identification put a strong negative effect on adolescent's mind (Zera, 1992). The Perceived Parental Reactions refer about the perceptions of their parents, initial reactions to their coming out. It contains eight theoretical dimensions of perceived parental reactions, including negative shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, general homophobia, and parent-focused concerns. According to research conducted The University of Texas, Austin - Coming out process is the most terrifying experience for Gay and Lesbian Individual (Crepault, 1994). If, same sex persons are having higher levels of depressive symptoms indicates that more negative psychological control from their parents. Not only Parental rejection but they often suffered from several psychological disorders (Xu, Wang, Budge, & Sun, 2023). Research indicates that gay persons are having high rate of depression, panic attacks and psychological distress than heterosexual men while on the other hand, lesbian individuals showed the symptoms of Generalized Anxiety Disorder than heterosexual women (Sahoo, 2023). There is another most terrifying factor – known as Suicidal Ideation which also negatively effects on the mental health of same sex individuals. There are researches suggesting that gay and lesbian individuals have high rates of suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and completed suicides than heterosexual individuals (Martin, 1991).

Researchers suggest that parental reaction after post disclosure can be typically categorized as positive, neutral, negative, or mixed. In general, negative reactions are more common than positive one. Positive reactions are like affirming and accepting while negative reaction means disapproving and rejecting. Negative reactions contain actions such as bullying, harassment, rejection and can even lead to escalate violence (McDonald, 1982). Rejection of homosexuals during adolescence has been linked to illegal drug use, depression, and sexual health risk in adulthood and suicide. Therefore, it is believed that negative reaction explicit or perceived are linked to negative outcomes while positive reactions lead to positive outcomes for homosexual community (Townsend, Wallick, & Cambre, 1993). It is found that parental support often linked to higher self- esteem, lower depression rates and less suicide attempts. But often disclosing sexual orientation in front of one's parents can be really disturbing. Here parental psychological control is very important because parents are always trying to impose their own rules or beliefs to their children which can affect them negatively during self –disclosure (Ganguly, 2023).

- **Psychological Distress**

Negative reaction from parents, rejection, threat, bullying and victimization can also affect on the mental health of lesbian and gay individual. Researchers claim that they higher rates of having mental disorders. Lesbian and gay individuals are currently possessing risks which often leads to psychological or mental distress and several psychological disorders (Baiocco & Laghi, 2012). Evidences support that lesbian and gay individuals are more suffering from mental health problems, substance abuse disorders such as addiction, affective disorders and suicide than heterosexual individuals (Ben-Ari, 1995). The reason behind their traumatic conditions is extreme amount of hatred, stigma, prejudice and discrimination because these are the things that shape the family system and the societal system and these are highly related to the traditional superstitious cultural belief and political

ideology (Conely, 2011). Most homosexual individuals are experiences in prejudice events, rejection, and hiding and concealing, internalized homophobia which often helps them to develop anxiety, depression, and psychological distress. Psychological distress refers, “any condition having the potential to arouse adaptive machinery of the individual” (Augelli D. , 2006). There is a research survey conducted by Joanna Semlyen at El; mentioned sexual minority groups have higher rates of developing mental disorders and committing suicide. They found that in United Kingdom Homosexual individuals have higher prevalence of poor mental health and low well -being, low self-esteem compared to heterosexual individual. Similar results have been found at United States, Netherland and other countries (Augelli & Grossman, 2001). Negative reaction from parents during sexual identity disclosure, verbal abuse, bullying, threat, discrimination and continuous violence are the responsible reasons of developing psychological distress and several psychological disorders. Not only in higher income countries but also in lower income countries, the picture is same (Fontanesi, Salvatore, Laghi, & Baiocco, 2014). It is common in these days that whenever adolescents and young adults identify themselves as gay or lesbian, at that immediate point of time they started to victimize by their own parents and peers and most of the times negative parental reaction can increase the rate of mental health issues like depression, aggression, social isolation, which ultimately leads towards suicidal ideation and later suicide (Henry, 2013).

Methodology

Research Objectives:

- To compare Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Perceived Parental Reaction.
- To compare Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction.
- To compare Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress.
- To study the relationship between Perceived Parental Reaction and Psychological Distress of Homosexuals.

Research Hypothesis:

- There will be no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Perceived Parental Reaction.
- There will be no significant differences between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction.
- There will be no significant differences between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress.
- There will be significant relationships between Perceived Parental Reactions and Psychological Distress of Homosexuals.

Variables:

Independent Variable:

- Homosexuals (Lesbian & Gay)

Dependent Variables:

- Perceived Parental Reaction (Mother and Father)
- Psychological Distress

Sample: A total of 94 individuals identifying as homosexuals were included in the present study. Among these participants, 29 identified as lesbian and 65 identified as gay. The sample was drawn from four major cities in Gujarat, namely Surat, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, and Gandhinagar, to ensure a broader representation of the target population across urban settings.

The participants were recruited using the snowball sampling technique, a non-probability sampling method particularly suitable for accessing hidden or hard-to-reach populations. In this approach, the recruitment process was initiated with a small number of initial participants (key informants), who subsequently referred other eligible individuals within their social networks. This referral process continued in successive waves, thereby forming a chain of participants until the desired sample size was achieved.

The use of snowball sampling facilitated access to individuals who might otherwise have been difficult to identify due to the sensitive nature of sexual orientation and associated social stigma. Although this method limited the generalizability of findings due to its non-random nature, it was considered appropriate for the exploratory and context-specific objectives of the study.

Inclusion Criteria –

- Homosexuals in between age group of 18 to 25 years was included for the research.
- Participants. who have identified their sexual orientation, were included in this research.
- Only those participants were selected who have already disclosed their sexual orientation in front of their parents.
- Participants who have completed their schooling, were selected for the research.

Exclusion Criteria –

- Homosexuals less than 18 years of age and more than 25 years was not included for the research.
- Homosexuals who didn't identify their sexual orientation, were not selected.
- The participants, whose parents was not aware about their sexual orientation, not considered as research participants.
- Participants who have not completed schooling was not included for the research.

Research Tool:

1. Perceived Parental Reaction Scale– The Perceived Parental Reactions Scale (PPRS) has been designed by Brian L.B. Willoughby, N.M. Malik and K.M. Lindahl in 2006 to assess gay, lesbian, and bisexual (LGB) individuals' perceptions of their parents' initial reactions to their coming out. It evaluates eight theoretical dimensions of perceived parental reactions, including negative shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, general homophobia, and parent-focused concerns.

Description

The PPRS is a 32-item scale wherein self-identified LGB individuals are asked to rate their mother's or father's initial reactions to their coming out. Maternal and paternal reactions are rated on separate versions of the scale, which are identical except for references to parent gender. Individuals are required to think back to the week their mother or father found out about their sexual orientation and indicate agreement or disagreement with several possible reactions (e.g., cried tears of sadness) using a 5-point Likert scale. The PPRS was developed on the basis of Weinberg's (1972) love versus conventionality theory and Savin-Williams' (2001) initial reactions model.

Scoring

Before calculating the scale total, Items 1, 5, 8, and 10 are reverse scored. The PPRS total score is obtained by summing all items, with possible scores ranging from 32 to 160. Higher scores represent more negative perceived reactions from parents. Items assessing the various theoretical domains are as follows: negative shock (Items 13, 18, 23, 28), denial (Items 14, 19, 24, 29), anger (Items 15, 20, 25, 30), bargaining (Items 16, 21, 25, 31), depression (Items 17, 22, 26, 32), acceptance (Items 1, 5, 8, 10), general homophobia (Items 3, 6, 9, 11), and parent-focused concerns (Items 2, 4, 7, 12). Despite these various theoretical domains, the scale should be used as a whole, because factor analyses have not yet supported the use of individual domain scores as discrete subscales.

Reliability

This scale is highly reliable, the α value is .97.

2. Kessler, Psychological Distress Scale (K10) – The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) is a simple measure of psychological distress originally developed by Ronald C. Kessler at Harvard University in the year

1992. The K10 scale involves 10 questions about emotional states each with a five-level response scale. The measure can be used as a brief screen to identify levels of distress. The tool can be given to patients to complete, or alternatively the questions can be read to the patient by the practitioner.

Scoring

Five-point Likert system is there for measurement from 'None of the time' to 'All of the time'. yielding a minimum score of 10 and a maximum score of 50. Low scores indicate low levels of psychological distress and high scores indicate high levels of psychological distress.

Interpretation of scores

10 - 19 Likely to be well

20 - 24 Likely to have a mild disorder

25 - 29 Likely to have a moderate disorder

30 - 50 Likely to have a severe disorder

Reliability

This is a 10-item questionnaire intended to yield a global measure of distress based on questions about anxiety and depressive symptoms that a person has experienced in the most recent 4 weeks period. Reliability is - $\alpha = .84$ (Kessler RC, 2003).

Procedure of Data Collection:

The study comprised participants who self-identified as homosexual individuals, and data were collected from four major cities in Gujarat, namely Surat, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, and Gandhinagar. In accordance with the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, participants were recruited using the snowball sampling technique, which was considered appropriate given the sensitive and relatively hard-to-reach nature of the target population.

Prior to participation, informed written consent was obtained from all respondents. Participants were thoroughly briefed regarding the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without any adverse consequences. Detailed instructions were provided to ensure accurate and complete responses to all items within the assessment instruments. Ethical considerations, including confidentiality, anonymity, and data protection, were rigorously upheld throughout the research process.

Data were collected using standardized psychometric instruments. Specifically, the Perceived Parental Reaction Scale was administered to assess participants' perceptions of parental responses to their sexual orientation, while the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) was employed to measure levels of psychological distress. The instruments selected for the study have demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity in prior research. Necessary clarifications were provided during administration to minimize response bias and enhance data quality.

Statistical Analysis:

Data has been analyzed by using Independent Sample t-test and Pearson Correlation Test. Independent Sample t-test was used to compare the mean scores of two different groups and to determine whether there was a significant difference between them or not.

Pearson Correlation Test was used to measure the relationship between two variables and to check whether the variables were positively associated with each other or not.

Graphical representation of results have also been done.

Result And Interpretation

Table 1: Comparison between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Perceived Parental Reaction

Sexual Orientation	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Gay	91.03	28.02	1.83
Lesbian	79.93	24.95	

Table 1 indicates the t value = 1.83, which means that there is no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Perceived Parental Reaction. This further indicates that the null hypothesis got accepted. Apart from that the Mean differences indicates Gay participants (M = 91.03) are having a bit of stronger Maternal Reaction than Lesbian participants (M = 24.95).

Table 2: Comparison between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction

Sexual Orientation	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Gay	93.21	27.87	2.03*
Lesbian	81.00	24.62	

Table 2 indicates the t value = 2.03 ($p < 0.05$), which means there is a significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction. Therefore, null hypothesis got rejected.

Further Mean differences suggest that Gay participants (M = 93.21) are having higher level of Perceived Parental Reaction from Father compared to Lesbian participants (M = 81.00).

Table 3: Comparison between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress

Sexual Orientation	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Gay	28.24	10.83	1.71
Lesbian	24.20	9.84	

The Independent Sample t-test was carried out to examine the difference between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress. As per the data analysisist value was found to be, $t = 1.71$, which indicates that there is no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress. Hence null hypothesis got accepted.

Apart from that, mean difference indicates, Gay participants (M = 28.24) are experiencing slightly greater Psychological Distress than Lesbian participants (M = 24.20).

Table 4: Correlation between Perceived Parental Reaction, Mother & Psychological Distress of Homosexuals

Variables	(1)	(2)
Perceived Parental Reaction Mother (1)	1	.75**
Psychological Distress (2)	.75**	1

Table 4 highlights a strong positive correlation between Perceived Parental Reactions of Mother and Psychological Distress of Homosexuals, with the value of $r = .75$, $p < .01$.

The correlation coefficient shows a higher degree of association, means if Perceived Parental Reaction from Mother's increases, the levels of Psychological Distress also increase

Table 5: Correlation between Perceived Parental Reaction, Father & Psychological Distress of Homosexuals

Variables	(1)	(2)
Perceived Parental Reaction Father (1)	1	.75**
Psychological Distress (2)	.75**	1

Table 5 highlights a strong positive correlation between Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction and Psychological Distress among Gay and Lesbian individuals, with the value of $r = .75$, $p < .01$.

Similarly in this table, the correlation coefficient highlights a higher degree of association, meaning if Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction increases then Psychological Distress also increase.

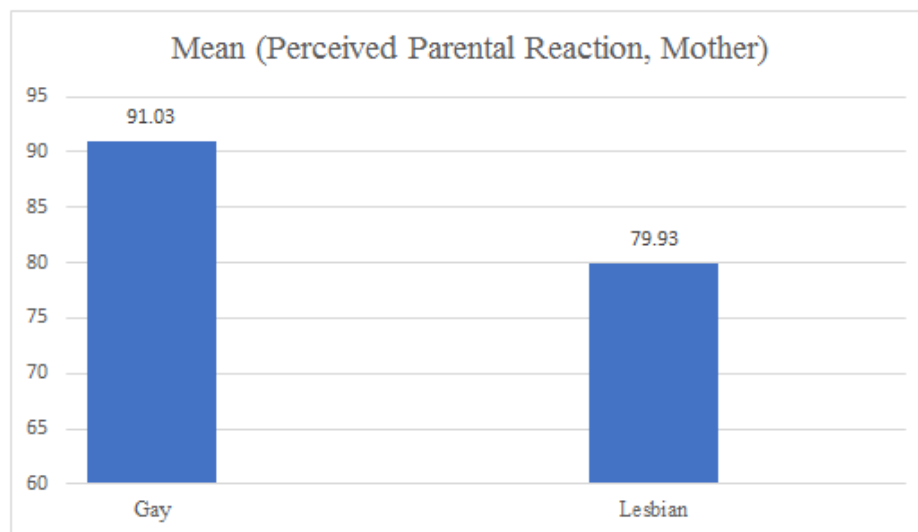
Figure 1: Mean Differences between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Perceived Parental Reaction

figure 1 suggests that on the basis of mean value, gay participants have slightly higher maternal reactions as compared to lesbian participants.

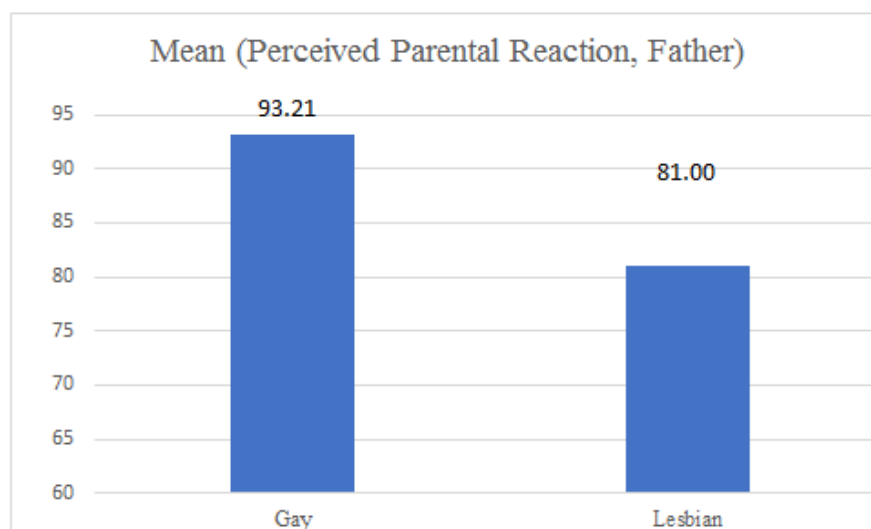
Figure 2: Mean Differences between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Perceived Parental Reaction

Figure 2, strongly suggests Mean difference between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Responses. It indicates Gay individuals are experiencing more Paternal Responses than Lesbian Individuals.

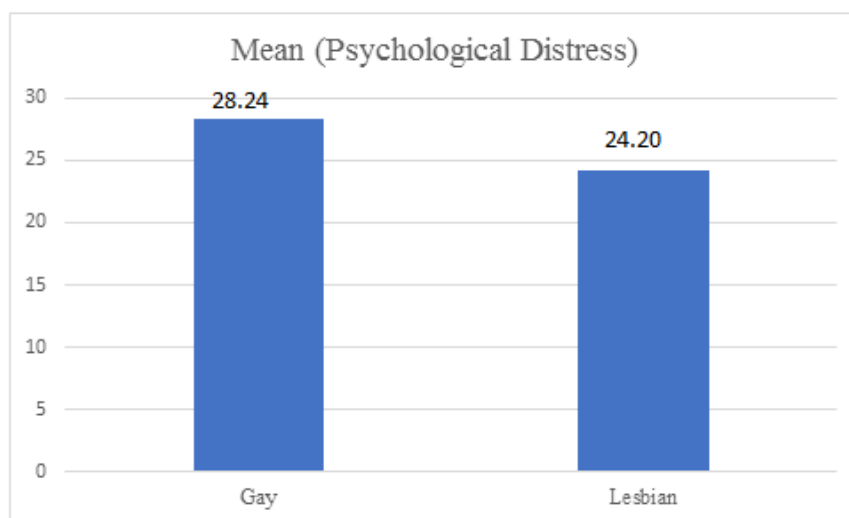
Figure 3: Mean Differences between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress

Figure 3 suggests that, based on the mean values, gay participants experience slightly higher psychological distress compared to lesbian participants.

Discussion

The purpose of the research was to compare Lesbian and Gay on Perceived Parental Reaction Mother and Father and Psychological Distress. Apart from that to assess the co-relation between Perceived Parental Reaction of Mother and Father with Psychological Distress of Homosexuals. As per the results of **Table 1**, there is no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Reaction. The data were analysed using the Independent Samples *t*-test, and it suggests that maternal responses to sexual orientation were similar among Lesbian and Gay individuals. In contrast, a statistically significant difference was observed between lesbian and gay participants in relation to Paternal reactions in **Table 2**. So, Paternal reactions may differ based on the sexual orientation of the individual, (when gay, identified) highlighting the potentially distinct role of fathers in shaping the experiences of Homosexual individuals. So, why Gay men are getting more negative responses and the reason is shocking. In our society it is believed that men must be dominant not vulnerable, a strong patriarchal culture is there which is about how a man must dress, must behave and must talk and these doesn't fall under the criteria of Gay men characteristics and that is why they are getting more threat and hatred from the parents mostly from the father figures

The results of this study are also supported by the following research findings:

Research conducted by **Laythe. B. et al (2025)**, suggested that Gay men are often struggling from more negative parental reactions from Fathers, due to higher amount of stereotypical society and patriarchal cultures. In this research, it was found that Gay men scored higher on the 'Affectionless Control' from their parents. Mean differences also suggested that Gay men (**M=42.50**) are getting more hatred from their parents than Lesbian women (**M = 29.80**).

There is another research conducted by **DelPriore and Ronan (2023)**, revealed that mean differences in perceived paternal reactions differ between Lesbian women and gay men during the procedure of sexual orientation identification. The findings showed that gay men reported slightly higher negative reactions from fathers (**M = 2.13**) compared to lesbian women (**M = 2.02**). The study suggested that traditional masculine norms and patriarchal expectations may contribute to stronger paternal negativity toward gay sons during the coming-out process.

In **Table 3**, data were analysed through Independent Sample *t*-test, which indicates that there is no significant difference between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress, means the effect of Psychological Distress is similar among Homosexual individuals. There is research given in below –

There is research conducted by, **Darja Grigoreva, & Bence Szaszko, 2024** – who discussed how general stress level effects on psychological well being of sexual minority people. The study included 270 participants. Researchers specifically used analysis of variance and independent group comparisons to check the significant differences between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress. During result analysis it was revealed that no significant differences on sexual orientation when comparing Lesbian to Gay on Psychological Distress.

Another study done by, **Mark Assink & Henny M. W. Bos, 2024** – explored the role of intra-minority individuals. Researchers conducted independent sample t test to compare male and female sexual minority participants on Psychological Distress, life satisfaction and minority stress variables. Findings suggested no significant differences between sexual minority groups on Psychological Distress.

As per the Family Stress Theory, parental reactions of sexual identity disclosure are the result of three basic elements, such as family's relational capabilities and competence, family member's beliefs about meanings of stressful events and the number of stressors that related to family stability. As earlier mentioned, that the process of coming out is one of the most important challenges for LG individuals, however despite the risk of disapproval, bullying and victimization – most of the time same sex attracted individuals decide to come out to their parents first. Researchers suggest that parental age is the important factor behind their reaction towards coming out process, if parents are old then there might be higher possibility of getting negative responses. Apart from that lower level of parental education, involvement in the superstitious religious practices and traditional concept regarding marriage and more traditional concept regarding sex roles are the factors affecting on adolescence during self –identification. If one or both the parents hold preexisting negative values and morals about homosexuality, then there is a high percent of possibility that they may be repulsed by the disclosure. Even sometimes it is more commonly noticed by the researchers that mothers are more likely to give positive response during self -disclosure than fathers, but this can be opposite, which means sometimes mothers may be giving more negative reaction than fathers, show a greater concerns/worries and a display of the greater amount of anger and guilt than fathers (Chrisler, 2017).

Finally, **Table 4 and 5**, indicates a strong positive correlation between Perceived Parental Reaction of Mother and Father with psychological Distress among Lesbian and Gay. data were analysed through Pearson Correlation which indicated stronger parental responses are often leading towards higher level of Psychological Distress. It effects on the psychological wellbeing of homosexuals. An example of research is given in below –

Research conducted by **Ryan et al. (2009)**, explored how family rejection influences the mental health of lesbian and gay adolescents. The study was carried out by collecting data from 224 LG young adults. Correlation along with regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between parental rejection and psychological outcomes. Findings suggested that individuals who experienced higher levels of family rejection during adolescence reported greater psychological distress in adulthood, particularly in the form of depression and suicidal behavior. The study further revealed a strong positive association between family rejection and psychological distress ($r = .50-.60$, $p < .001$). In addition, participants exposed to high levels of rejection were found to be 8.4 times more likely to attempt suicide and 5.9 times more likely to experience severe depressive symptoms compared to those who reported lower levels of family rejection.

Baiocco et al. (2016) conducted a study among gay and lesbian adults in Italy to check and to assess the effect of parental reactions after disclosure of sexual orientation. The research included a sample of 150 homosexual adolescents, and statistical techniques such as path analysis and correlation analysis were applied to examine the relationship between family response and psychological distress. The findings indicated that adolescents who received negative reactions from parents experienced greater internalized sexual stigma along with increased psychological difficulties. A significant positive relationship was found between negative parental reactions and poor psychological adjustment ($r = .47$, $p < .001$). The study also highlighted that family dysfunction played an important role in predicting psychological distress among the participants.

Rothman et al. (2012) examined the impact of parental responses on psychological health among homosexual adults. The study was conducted by using survey method. Over 177 data were collected from lesbian and gay individuals. Group comparison and regression analysis were used to analyse the findings. The results suggested that individuals who experienced unsupportive or rejecting parental reactions reported poorer mental and

emotional health outcomes. Higher levels of psychological distress, depressive symptoms, and substance use were observed among participants who perceived parental rejection, whereas supportive parental responses were associated with better psychological well-being. The difference in psychological distress between the two groups was found to be statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Applications

Results are providing some critical information regarding how, negative parental responses are strongly correlated with psychological distress during sexual orientation identification. Due to this reason homosexual adults are having severe mental health trauma and this is exactly why they end up of committing suicide or in some cases they are having higher suicidal ideation. Therefore, this research will able to give a clinical and counselling importance toward homosexual community. Apart from that this research will serve as evidence, which will ultimately motivate several NGOs to become more active so that they can influence policymakers to make policies for them.

It can also bring awareness towards family members of sexual minority community, by introducing Family Counselling approach. So that even families can understand that homosexuality is not a disease or a disorder, it is simply a normal behavior.

In earlier days, homosexuality was viewed very negatively, and conversations related to homosexual individuals were often avoided due to the higher levels of social stigma and prejudice. However, growing research and awareness have helped bring gradual changes in people's attitudes and understandings regarding Homosexuality. Even though stereotypes still continue in many parts of the Indian society. Therefore, increasing researches in this area can play an important role in reducing discrimination against homosexuals and promoting acceptance in the society itself. Hence this research can also help to spread awareness among educational settings, workplaces, and the broader community, regarding the importance of equality and the equal protection of sexual minority individuals.

Conclusion

- No significant difference was found between Lesbian and Gay on Maternal Reaction.
- Significant difference was found between Lesbian and Gay on Paternal Reaction.
- No significant difference was found between Lesbian and Gay on Psychological Distress.
- Significant positive relationship found between Perceived Parental Reaction of Father and Mother with Psychological Distress of Lesbian and Gay.

Limitations

- Due to limited amount of time period only 94 samples has collected and out of 94 samples, 65 samples were Gay individuals and 29 samples collected from Lesbian individuals, which created a noticeable imbalance between these two groups.
- Data were collected only from the four major cities in Gujrat (Surat, Vadodora, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar) and it doesn't cover the struggles of homosexuals in rural areas of Gujrat.
- The research is strictly focused on the 18-25 age group; it doesn't focus on the older Homosexual adults.
- The use of the Snowball Sampling technique may have increased the probability of obtaining a homogeneous sample, as participants were more likely to recruit individuals from similar social and demographic backgrounds.

Suggestions

- The results would be more significant, if a larger sample and broader age range sample were included in future research.
- In future researches sample from the smaller cities, will give more realistic outlook regarding the struggles and negative parental responses towards sexual minority communities.

- Future research should include a wider age range, particularly older homosexual adults, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of perceived parental reactions across different stages of life.
- Future studies should use more diverse and randomized sampling techniques to reduce the probability of obtaining a homogeneous sample and to ensure better representation of participants from varied social, cultural, and demographic backgrounds.

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