



**PERCEIVED FAMILY ACCEPTANCE, RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AND
SELF ACCEPTANCE IN HOMOSEXUAL AND HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the way perceived family acceptance relates to relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance among young adults in romantic relationships, and the differences between homosexual and heterosexual relationships. A sample consisting of 101 young adults (aged 18 to 26 years) in romantic relationships (41 in same sex relationships and 60 in opposite sex relationships) was gathered using purposive sampling. Participants reported their responses to items on three standardized tools: The Perceived Acceptance Scale, The Relationship Assessment Scale and the Unconditional Self-Acceptance Questionnaire. The data gathered from these psychometric tools was statistically analyzed using Pearson's correlation and independent samples T-test on SPSS. Results of the study showed a moderate positive correlation ($r=.296$) between perceived family acceptance and

relationship satisfaction, and a strong positive correlation ($r=.688$) between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance. Findings also suggests that on average, heterosexual couples are likely to have higher perceived family acceptance ($t=-2.977$) and higher self-acceptance ($t=-2.881$) than homosexual couples. The implications of this study, its limitations, and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

Keywords: *Perceived Family Acceptance, Relationship Satisfaction, Self-Acceptance, Homosexual, Same Sex, Heterosexual, Opposite Sex, LGBTQ, Queer*

INTRODUCTION

In a collectivistic society like India, family dynamics play a pivotal role in shaping individual identity and even play a significant role in the different types of relationships we go on to build with others, particularly romantic ones. Research suggests that even Maslow's hierarchy of needs applies differently to collectivistic cultures, with the need for belongingness classed as "basic need," the self-esteem need is deemed irrelevant, and self-actualization is viewed as meeting societally and culturally expected goals rather than individual pursuits (Gambrel & Cianci, 2003).

The desire for family acceptance and support may be even more significant for people with different sexualities, i.e., those belonging to the LGBTQ+ community. Even though section 377 of the Indian penal code states that criminalized homosexuality has been abolished since 2018, the LGBTQ+ community of India has a long road ahead in terms of gaining social acceptance and normalization in our society. Queer individuals in India have long grappled with issues of societal acceptance and familial support, which has had a significant impact on their mental and physical health, and self-concept (Saraff et al., 2022).

This may impact their romantic relationships as well, and that is a key topic of investigation in this study.

Previous research has shown the implications of family dynamics such as acceptance and support on individual psychological factors such as self-esteem, self-compassion, optimism, overall wellbeing etc. as well as relational consequences, particularly in collectivistic societies where the family (parents especially) is more involved in the romantic lives of their children. However, through the literature review conducted as part of research for this study, it is clear that there is limited research examining the distinct experiences of homosexual and heterosexual individuals, with respect to the relationship between family acceptance, factors pertaining to self-concept (such as self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-efficacy etc.), and relational outcomes such as relationship dynamic, relationship satisfaction etc., particularly in an eastern society.

Family Acceptance

The concept of acceptance by one's family can be defined as relatively stable positive regard by family members, expressed through caring gestures that indicate value and concern for the individual. It includes support, the ability to be our authentic selves without the fear of judgement, dismissal or punishment, and a sense of safety and security. For individuals belonging to sexual minorities, acceptance from family and friends also involves the acceptance of their queer identity and support for their freedom to love freely and form authentic romantic connections.

In India, homosexuality was deemed criminal until recently when in 2018, section 377 of the Indian Penal code was abolished, and homosexual love was de-criminalized. The LGBTQ+ community still does not have many fundamental civil rights such as marriage and

adoption rights in India. Queer literature from western cultures suggests that two-thirds of LGBTQ+ individuals disclose their orientation, and only half of them receive family acceptance (Rosario & Schrimshaw, 2012). Considering cultural differences in tolerance and societal acceptance, it is likely that in an eastern country like India, a much smaller percentage of sexual minorities even disclose their orientation to their families, especially their parents. Research suggests that the Indian LGBTQ+ community are highly likely to suffer from very poor mental health (Wandrekar & Nigudkar, 2020).

Family acceptance is strongly linked with higher self-esteem and better quality of life the same way for minorities such as people in the LGBTQ+ community as it is for cisgender individuals. (Putra, 2019) There is strong empirical evidence suggesting that higher levels of family acceptance can act as protection against psychological issues such as depression, suicidality, and self-harming behaviors, particularly for vulnerable queer adolescents. Higher family acceptance is also able to predict better mental and physical well-being. (Ryan et al., 2010)

Relationship Satisfaction

An individual may view their relationship as highly satisfying or unsatisfactory based on their subjective experience in their romantic relationship, and their interpretation of it (Keizer, 2014). There aren't any specific factors or characteristics that can be quantifiably viewed as having the capability to make a relationship satisfying. There are, however, many factors that may be able to predict how satisfying or unsatisfying a relationship may be. These include love, effective communication, trust, commitment, intimacy, compatible attachment styles, individual traits and how they interact, social background etc. (Józefacka et

al., 2023). Previous literature suggests that higher relationship satisfaction is positively associated with lower stress levels (Randall & Bodenmann, 2017).

Some studies indicate similar levels of relationship satisfaction in same sex and opposite sex couples while other findings indicate differences pertaining to specific stressors such as social acceptance, internalized stigma, prejudice, and discrimination etc. There is also research suggesting that interpersonal factors and context have little to no influence on relationship satisfaction in LGB adults (Pope et al., 2010). Research on relationship satisfaction in queer individuals also suggest that individuals with high internalized stigma towards their own sexuality are likely to have lower relationship satisfaction. There is also evidence that being “out” was positively related with relationship satisfaction. Interestingly, there was no significant influence of concealment or “being in the closet” on relationship satisfaction in LGB individuals (Ballester et al., 2021).

Self-Acceptance

Self-Acceptance can be understood as our acceptance of all aspects of ourselves. It is unconditional in nature, i.e., it includes acceptance of one’s positive as well as negative attributes. This includes acceptance of our various competencies such as academic, athletic etc., acceptance of our physical appearance and body and belief in our capacity to improve (Harvard Health, 2016).

Self-acceptance is a central concept in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy. REBT views low self-esteem as stemming from irrational beliefs referencing the rigid demands of perfection that we make from ourselves. Self-acceptance usually requires the individual to be able to dispute self-depreciation. A main goal in REBT is to restructure these irrational cognitions to move towards unconditional self-acceptance. Unconditional self-acceptance is a

state of accepting oneself despite success or failure. It also includes the capacity to accept ourselves even in the absence of social acceptance (Bernard, 2014).

There is empirical evidence indicating significant inverse correlation between unconditional self-acceptance and neuroticism (on the Big 5 personality dimensions) (Davies, 2006). Unconditional self-acceptance is also found to show a high negative correlation with symptoms of anxiety. Individuals having higher unconditional self-acceptance showed a more positive mood after exposure to imagined undesirable events (Haaga & Chamberlain, 2001).

Research suggests that LGBTQ+ individuals generally show lower self-acceptance when compared to their heterosexual counterparts. There is also evidence of lower self-acceptance in queer youth being associated with lack of family acceptance, low levels of self-disclosure (pertaining to their sexuality/gender) and internalized homophobia and heteronormativity. LGBTQ+ individuals with lower self and sexuality acceptance are also shown to have poorer mental health, such as showing more depressive symptoms and overall low mood (Camp et al., 2020).

The nuanced interplay of family acceptance, self-acceptance and relationship satisfaction can allow us deeper insight into the interpersonal relationships and conflicts faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community in India. The current study also considers the effects of these factors in the lives of heterosexual young adults as it helps us establish a baseline and examine the differences in the familial and romantic lives of the homosexual and heterosexual young adults in the country.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study investigating how self-acceptance influences romantic relationships was carried out. The findings of the study showed a positive significant relationship between self-acceptance and satisfying romantic relationships. It was also found that both happiness and family type had mediating effects however, happiness had a more direct effect and family type had a more indirect one. Being part of a healthy monogamous family where children had positive social interactions and participated in recreational family activities were found to develop higher self-acceptance and form more satisfying romantic relationships (Oduaran et al., 2023).

The research by Gaur et al. (2023) explored the way the LGBTQ+ community in developing countries was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its various outcomes. The study explored that queer individuals struggled to seek help and access to physical and healthcare services due to fears of social rejection, discrimination, physical assault etc. Additionally, this study also concluded a scarcity of resources and services (such as healthcare, mental health services, safe spaces) available to the LGBTQ+ community in India.

The purpose of the study by Parwani and Talukdar (2023) was to explore how the negative attitudes of society and the absence of social support affect the mental health of LGBT+ people in India. The results demonstrated a significant detrimental impact of society's hostile attitude on the mental health of the Indian LGBT+ population. The results also demonstrated that poor problem- and emotion-focused coping self-efficacy negatively moderated the relationship between the hostile attitude of society and mental health, and that the hostile attitude of society and the Indian LGBT+ community's problem- and emotion-focused coping self-efficacy were negatively moderated by a lack of social support.

An examination on the impact of the various ecological levels (self, couple, family) on relationship satisfaction was explored. Regression results indicated that relationship satisfaction was significantly impacted by family acceptance, mental health and wellbeing, and conflict management styles, in intercultural relationships. The study by Maffini et al. (2022) also suggests that family acceptance can play a mediating role in conflict management styles and relationship satisfaction.

Study by Davis and Anderson (2020) was conducted to assess the role of family acceptance on personality disorder traits in non-heterosexual individuals. The sample consisted of 79 LGBT people. Results of the study indicated that a significant relationship exists between familial acceptance and disordered personality traits in the queer community.

Study by Ranade et al. (2020) aimed to explore the reactions and responses of the family members of queer individuals. Results suggested that the sudden awareness of their child's minority sexual orientation was often met with shock, disappointment and sometimes hostility. Most family members who have now come to terms with the sexuality of their child/sibling initially rejected it because it didn't "make sense" to them at the time.

A study by Huang et al. (2020) was conducted to examine the relationship between perceived attitudes towards the queer community and their issues, and the psychological wellbeing of queer adults. Using a huge sample of over 1500 queer adults in Taiwan, results of the study indicated that self-acceptance completely mediated the effects of LGB adult perceptions of friend acceptance and support for gay marriage on their psychological wellbeing.

Indian study by Wandrekar and Nigudkar (2020) was conducted to explore mental health in the LGBTQ+ community and the pathways that influence it. Results of this study indicated that high rates of psychological issues were found in the LGBT community of

India. This research also suggests that it might be significantly affected by the adapted minority stress model at play here.

Study by Fuller and Rutter (2017) aimed at evaluating the perceptions of queer adults regarding their parents' acceptance of their sexuality, and relationship satisfaction with their romantic partners was conducted. The study examined the responses of 147 lesbian women. It was observed that the mean parental reaction was very positive indicating that the parents were accepting of their children's queer identity. Findings of the study suggest a significant correlation between parental acceptance and relationship satisfaction in LGB adults. The study successfully proved that there is long term impact of parental acceptance or rejection on the future romantic relationship of LGBTQ+ individuals.

A study examined psychological adjustment and perceived parental rejection among 983 schoolchildren, aged 9-18. The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) and the Personality Adjustment Questionnaire (PAQ) were employed. The findings support the considerable correlation between children's psychological adjustment on multiple dimensions and their perception of rejection from both parents (Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2017).

The study by Snapp et al. (2015) compared sexuality-related social support measures of young adult adjustment in a cross-sectional study of 245 LGBT non-Latino White and Latino young adults (ages 21–25) in the United States. Support from friends, family, and the community was a powerful indicator of favorable results, as was one's living circumstances, sense of self, and LGBT acceptance.

In the study by Mohr and Fassinger (2003), data from 489 persons who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB), was used to examine a model that links attachment factors with self-acceptance and self-disclosure of sexual orientation. The general working model of attachment, the LGB variables, perceptions of parental support for sexual orientation, and

representations of early attachment experiences with parents were the four domains of variables that made up the model. Parental attachment was associated with general attachment and parental LGB support, which had an indirect effect on identification and outness.

In a study by Elizur and Ziv (2001) involving 114 homosexual men in Israel was conducted. The effects of the interplay of family acceptance, support, and awareness of homosexuality, on the psychological well-being and self-esteem of gay men, were examined. Multiple assessments of the path model concept suggested by the researchers gave rise to an alternative model based on the following conclusions: Family acceptance and family support play a significant role in the formation of a queer identity, particularly in relation to the process of coming out; and psychological adjustment of homosexual individuals.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The study aimed to understand how perceived family acceptance relates to self-acceptance and relationship satisfaction in homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Research Objectives

- To assess the relationship between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction in young adults in romantic relationships.
- To assess the relationship between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance in young adults in romantic relationships.
- To compare perceived family acceptance in homosexual and heterosexual couples.

- To compare relationship satisfaction in homosexual and heterosexual couples.
- To compare self-acceptance in homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Hypothesis

- Perceived family acceptance will show positive correlation with relationship satisfaction in young adults in romantic relationships.
- Perceived family acceptance will show positive correlation with self-acceptance in young adults in romantic relationships.
- Heterosexual couples will show higher perceived family acceptance than homosexual couples.
- Heterosexual couples will show higher relationship satisfaction than homosexual couples.
- Heterosexual couples will show higher relationship satisfaction than homosexual couples.

Research Design

The study used purposive sampling to collect the required data since the participants were required to meet a specific criterion (age group 18-26, in a romantic relationship). Sample selection was particularly specialised to gather data of young adults in same sex relationships. The data was collected using standardised self-report measures and is quantitative in nature. Statistical analysis was done via SPSS and the two main statistical techniques used were bivariate correlation and independent samples t-test. The relationship between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction, and the relationship between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance were explored through bivariate

correlations. T-tests were conducted to assess the differences in perceived family acceptance, relationship satisfaction and unconditional self-acceptance between the same sex (homosexual couples) and the opposite sex (heterosexual couples) groups.

Variables

This study explores the relationship between perceived family acceptance, relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance in young adults. Since this is a correlational study and not a cause-effect study, there are no independent or dependent variables. The variables used in this study are 1) Perceived family acceptance, 2) Relationship satisfaction, and 3) Self-acceptance.

Sample

This study used a sample of 101 young adults in romantic relationships (41 in same sex relationships and 60 in opposite sex relationships) in Delhi-NCR. The sample is divided into two groups, homosexual couples (which includes individuals in same sex relationships), and heterosexual couples (which includes those who are in opposite sex relationships). Purposive sampling was used to identify the sample based on the specified criteria of young adults between the ages of 18-26years who are in romantic relationships in Delhi NCR. This non-probability method was selected due to the significantly lower numbers of homosexual couples (who are also out about their sexual preference) occurring in a random sample from the population. Most of the individuals in the sample are university students while a few are working members of society.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants who are fluent in English, fall in the age group of 18 to 26, and are in a romantic relationship were included in this study. People who did not meet any of the above-mentioned criteria were excluded from the sample.

Exclusion Criteria

Individuals who aren't fluent in English, are younger than 18 or older than 26, or are currently single were excluded from the study and not selected as part of the sample.

Tools

Data was collected through the self-report method using standardized quantitative psychometric tools. The measures used in this study are:

- Perceived Acceptance Scale (Brock et al., 1998)
- Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988)
- Unconditional Self Acceptance Questionnaire (USAQ; Chamberlain & Haaga, 2001)

The Perceived Acceptance Scale developed by Brock et al. in 1998 is a 44-item self-report measure that is used to evaluate an individual's perception of how accepted they feel by their family and friends. The items in this measure use a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." There are also 4 subscales in this measure; Family PAS, Mother PAS, Father PAS and Friends PAS; each pertaining specifically to questions referencing perceptions of acceptance from family, mother, father, and friends respectively. Scores on this scale ranged from 44 to 220, indicating that higher overall scores suggest higher perceived family acceptance. The measure shows high internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha of .96. Each subscale also has high internal consistency (.94,.93,.92 and .80

for PAS mother, father, family, and friends respectively). It was also found that the PAS Mother and PAS Father subscales are more strongly related with the PAS family scale (.82 and .72) and with the PAS Friends subscale. There is also evidence of test-retest reliability across 6 weeks of .93. The factors in the scale were also correlated with other similar variables such as social support and emotional adjustment, and the results indicate high convergent and discriminant validity (Brock et al., 1998)

The Relationship Assessment Scale developed by Hendrick in 1988 is a self-report measure consisting of 7-items to evaluate general relationship satisfaction in all types of romantic relationships. The items in this instrument are measured on a 5-point Likert scale and 2 of the 7 items are reverse scored. Scores obtained in this construct are characterized as “low satisfaction,” “average satisfaction” and “high satisfaction.” The scores on the scale range from 7 to 35 with scores above 22 indicating high relationship satisfaction and scores below 14 suggesting low relationship satisfaction. This measure has been found to have high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach alpha=.88). This measure was found to be positively correlated with other psychometric tools measuring the quality of romantic relationships, which indicates that there is criterion-related validity. Factor analysis with other related constructs (such as relationship quality, adjustment in close relationships) has demonstrated convergent validity. There is also evidence of divergent validity through factor analysis of the RAS with unrelated constructs (Vaughn & Baier, 1999).

The Unconditional self-acceptance Questionnaire (USAQ), developed by Haaga and Chamberlain (2001), is a self-report measure that consists of 20 items that measure the level of unconditional self-acceptance. This scale is derived from central theories of REBT. The items are scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “Almost Always Untrue” to “Almost Always True.” Respondents may select the middle response “Equally Often True and Untrue” if a statement only sometimes holds true for them and other times not. Such responses will

always receive a score of 4. 11 out of the 20 items are reverse scored. Resultant scores may range from 20 to 140 with higher scores indicating higher levels of unconditional self-acceptance. This measure was initially found to have high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach alpha .86). Further studies have shown satisfactory internal consistency with Cronbach alpha scores ranging from .75 to .83. There are indications of concurrent validity pertaining to positive correlations found between this measure and other measures of self-acceptance (Falkenstein & Haaga, 2013).

Procedure

Participants who met the criteria (young adults aged between 18-26 currently in a romantic relationship) were asked to fill out the three self-report measures used in this study. They were informed about the aims and objectives of the study and voluntarily consented to participate in this research. 75% of the data was gathered through a google form that included basic demographic information and the three measures, while the remaining 25% was gathered through a printed-out version of the google doc that the participants had to complete with a pen or pencil. The tools used had 44, 7 and 20 items respectively, in the order of occurrence in the google form. The total 71-item questionnaire was completed by most participants in 20-25 minutes. The gathered data was then assembled in an excel file that was then analyzed using bivariate correlation and independent samples t-test on SPSS. The results of the study were shared with the participants, and individual results were shared with participants who had requested them.

Statistical Analysis

The data gathered from a sample of 101 young adults (41 in same sex relationships and 60 in opposite sex relationships) over three standardized scales was evaluated using the SPSS software. Statistical techniques used in this study are 1) Pearson's correlation and 2) Independent samples T-test.

RESULT

The data was first explored using SPSS to understand the descriptive statistics. Normality tests were conducted for the three variables. Perceived family acceptance, relationship satisfaction, and unconditional self-acceptance were found to be normally distributed across the entire sample, and for the homosexual and heterosexual sub samples. Pearson correlation was used to examine relationships between subject variables, and independent samples t-test was used to explore differences between subject variables in the homosexual and heterosexual groups.

Statistical analysis is categorized and explained by hypothesis tested below.

Hypothesis 1

Bi-variate correlation between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction was conducted and the resultant table (table 1) shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction is .296 and the p-value is 0.003. The correlation between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction is significant at .01 level.

Table 1*Correlation between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction*

Variables	Perceived family acceptance	Relationship Satisfaction
1. Perceived family acceptance	1	.296*
2. Relationship satisfaction	.296*	1

*Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis 2

Bi-variate correlation between perceived family acceptance and unconditional self-acceptance was conducted and the resultant table (table 4) shows the Pearson correlation coefficient is .668, with a p-value of .000. The correlation between perceived family acceptance and unconditional self-acceptance was found to be significant at .01 level.

Table 2*Correlation between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance*

Variables	<i>Perceived family acceptance</i>	<i>Self-acceptance</i>
1. Perceived family acceptance	1	.668*
2. Self-acceptance	.668*	1

*Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis 3

Independent Samples T-test comparing perceived family acceptance between homosexual and heterosexual couples is shown in table 3. Results obtained show $t = -2.977$ and $p\text{-value} = .004$. Significant difference was found between homosexual couples and heterosexual couples in perceived family acceptance.

Table 3*Differences in homosexual and heterosexual couples in perceived family acceptance*

Variables	Homosexual couple (N=41)		Heterosexual couple (N=60)		t-score
	M	SD	M	SD	
Perceived family acceptance	125.293	32.2779	145.817	35.1532	-2.977

p < 0.05 (2-tailed)

Hypothesis 4

Independent Samples T-test comparing relationship satisfaction between homosexual and heterosexual couples is shown in Table 4. The result of t-test for relationship satisfaction obtained is $t=-1.494$ and $p\text{-value}=.138$. No significant difference was found in relationship satisfaction between homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Table 4*Differences in homosexual and heterosexual couples in relationship satisfaction*

Variables	Homosexual couple (N=41)		Heterosexual couple (N=60)		t-score
	M	SD	M	SD	
Relationship satisfaction	24.244	6.6962	26.333	7.0390	-1.494

p < 0.05 (2-tailed)

Hypothesis 5

Independent Samples T-test comparing self-acceptance between homosexual and heterosexual couples is shown in Table 5. T-test for self-acceptance shows $t=-2.881$ and $p\text{-value}=.005$. There is a significant difference in self-acceptance in homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Table 5

Differences in homosexual and heterosexual couples in self-acceptance

Variables	Homosexual couple (N=41)		Heterosexual couple (N=60)		t-score
	M	SD	M	SD	
Self-Acceptance	71.146	16.4948	79.650	13.1030	-2.881

$p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)

DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to assess the relationship of perceived family acceptance with relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance in homosexual (same sex) and heterosexual (opposite sex) couples. It also seeks to compare the differences between homosexual and heterosexual couples in terms of perceived family acceptance, relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance.

Relationship satisfaction was measured using the Relationship Assessment scale (RAS) by Haaga and Chamberlain (2001). Perceived family acceptance was measured using

the Perceived Acceptance Scale by Brock (1998). Relationship satisfaction was measured using the Relationship Assessment Scale by Hendrick (1988).

Data was collected from a sample of 101 young adults in romantic relationships (41 in same sex relationships and 60 in opposite sex relationships) and analyzed using Pearson's correlation and independent samples t-test.

The first objective was to study the relationship between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction. The hypothesis stated that there will be a significant positive correlation between the two variables. This was evaluated using Pearson's correlation and results indicate that there is a moderate positive correlation ($r=.296$) between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction that is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, and our hypothesis was accepted.

The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance. The hypothesis stated that there will be a significant positive relationship between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance. Results of Pearson's correlation indicate a strong positive correlation ($r=.668$) between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance which is significant at 0.01 level. This suggests that we can reject the null hypothesis.

The third objective of the study was to assess the difference between perceived family acceptance in homosexual and heterosexual couples. The hypothesis stated that people in heterosexual couples would experience higher perceived family acceptance than individuals in homosexual couples. Independent samples t-test as used to analyze this data and a p-value of .004 was obtained. Since this is much smaller than can .05, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between homosexual and heterosexual couples, in perceived family acceptance. Comparing the mean scores shows that individuals in

heterosexual couples are more likely to show higher perceived family acceptance than individuals in same sex (homosexual) relationships. Thus, we can reject null hypothesis and accept our hypothesis.

The fourth objective of the study was to compare the differences in relationship between same sex (homosexual) and opposite sex (heterosexual) couples. The hypothesis stated that heterosexual couples will show statistically significant higher relationship satisfaction than homosexual couples. Since the data was found to be normally distributed, this was analyzed using independent samples T-test. A p-value of .138 was obtained which is bigger than .05 which indicated that there is no significant difference in relationship satisfaction between same sex and opposite sex couples. Therefore, we failed to reject the null hypothesis.

The fifth objective of the study was to compare the difference in self-acceptance between people in homosexual relationships and people in heterosexual relationships. The hypothesis stated that individuals in heterosexual relationships would show higher self-acceptance than individuals in homosexual relationships. The data was found to be normally distributed, and an independent samples t-test was used to compute this. Results showed a p-value of .005 which is much smaller than the significance level of .05. This indicates a significant difference in self-acceptance of individuals in heterosexual and homosexual couples. Looking at the mean scores, we can conclude that individuals in heterosexual relationships show much higher self-acceptance than individuals in homosexual relationships. Thus, we can both reject the null hypothesis and accept our hypothesis.

This study was successful in understanding and establishing the link between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction. Findings of this study also suggested a strong correlation between perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance, and

this can be further seen as heterosexual couples showed higher perceived family acceptance than homosexual couples, also showed higher self-acceptance than homosexual couples, strengthening the results of the correlation. In this study, we reviewed research on the societal stigma and rejection faced by members of the LGBTQ community, which may attribute to their lower scores of family acceptance. Further research into attributional factors is recommended.

Limitations and Recommendations

There are a few limitations in this study that can be explored and resolved by future research to improve the accuracy of the results. Since the data was collected on a self-report basis, it may be subject to individual factors such as personal bias, personality factors, tendency to respond in a socially acceptable manner and situational factors such as time constraints or bad mood during conduction. Controlling extraneous variables by the use of more experimental data collection, larger sample, and/or using qualitative elements etc. can yield more accurate results. The sample size of this study is quite small. A larger sample size would be able to provide more accurate results and be a more effective predictor of the population. This study was conducted within a limited time frame of just over two months. A similar study where the researchers can devote more time to review existing literature and collect more diverse data would provide results that are a lot more applicable to the population. The results of this study can provide us with novel information that can be used to increase our understanding into family acceptance dynamics in eastern cultures, how they impact individuals belonging to the LGBTQ community, and the effects they have on romantic relationships, particularly same sex ones.

However, this study is a general exploration rather than an in-depth investigation. More in-depth analysis can help not only strengthen or weaken the results, but also provide explanations for the relationships between the variables in this study. Expanding on the

statistical exploration of this data, such as using regression analysis, can provide more information (such as predictive relationship) about the sample, beyond the currently explored parameters of correlation and differences.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at exploring how perceived family acceptance relates with relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance in young adults in romantic relationships. The study also investigated the differences in perceived family acceptance, relationship satisfaction and self-acceptance between homosexual (same sex) and heterosexual (opposite sex) couples. The Perceived Acceptance Scale was used to measure perceived family acceptance, the Relationship Assessment Scale was used to measure general relationship satisfaction and the Unconditional Self-Acceptance Questionnaire was used to assess self-acceptance. Data was collected and statistically analyzed using Pearson's correlation and independent samples T test.

Correlational findings revealed that there is a moderate positive correlation ($r=.298$) between perceived family acceptance and relationship satisfaction, and a strong positive correlation ($r=.668$) between family acceptance and self-acceptance. Results from t-tests show that there is a significant difference in perceived family acceptance and in self-acceptance between homosexual and heterosexual couples, but no significant difference in relationship satisfaction between homosexual couples and heterosexual couples. It was found that heterosexual couples are more likely to have higher perceived family acceptance and self-acceptance than homosexual couples. Limitations of the study and recommendations for further exploration were discussed.

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