

# Attitudes Toward Homosexuality Across Generations: The Role of Sexual Orientation in A Collectivistic Context

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## **Abstract:**

This study examined the differences in attitudes toward homosexuality among Generations X (1965–1980), Y (1981–1996), and Z (1997–2012) and explored the relationship between these attitudes and self-reported sexual orientation. A cross-sectional design was employed with a sample of 120 participants (55 male, 65 female) recruited via convenience sampling. Participants completed the Homosexuality Attitude Scale (Kite & Deaux, 1986) and the Sexual Orientation Scale (Sagayaraj & Gopal, 2020). A one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in attitudes across generations ( $F = 8.493, p < .001$ ), with younger generations (Y and Z) reporting more positive attitudes than Generation X. Furthermore, the majority of participants identified as heterosexual (62.5%), with smaller proportions identifying as bisexual (17.5%), asexual (14.16%), or homosexual (5.83%). Results indicate that generational cohort is a significant factor shaping attitudes toward homosexuality, reflecting broader socio-cultural shifts. The findings underscore the need for tailored educational and social interventions to foster acceptance and reduce stigma, particularly among older generations in collectivistic settings.

**Keywords:** homosexuality, attitudes, sexual orientation, generation gap, Generations X Y Z, collectivistic culture

## **INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary society, attitudes toward homosexuality remain polarized, with significant implications for the psychological well-being and social integration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. Despite increasing visibility and legal advancements in many regions, stigma and negative beliefs persist, often rooted in cultural, religious, and generational values (APA, 2008; Higa et al., 2014). This is particularly salient in collectivistic cultures, where community norms often prioritize conformity and traditional family structures, potentially exacerbating minority stress for non-heterosexual individuals (Abreu & Kenny, 2017).

Sexual orientation, defined as an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction (APA, 2008), is a core component of identity. Societal acceptance of diverse sexual orientations has evolved, with research suggesting a generational divide: younger generations (e.g., Millennials, Gen Z) generally exhibit greater acceptance of homosexuality compared to older cohorts (e.g., Gen X) due to increased exposure, education, and changing social norms (Diamond, 2000; Kasasa, 2021). However, within

collectivistic contexts, where familial and social harmony are emphasized, coming out and discussing sexuality may be especially hindered, affecting mental health and life satisfaction (Bartram, 2021).

Theoretical explanations for attitudes range from biological (e.g., neuroanatomical correlates; LeVay, 1991) to sociocultural perspectives (e.g., social learning; Herek, 2000). Regardless of etiology, the practical impact of negative attitudes includes discrimination, cyberbullying, and internalized homophobia, leading to adverse outcomes such as suicidality among sexual minorities (Fergusson et al., 1999).

This study aims to investigate generational differences in attitudes toward homosexuality and their association with self-reported sexual orientation in a collectivistic cultural setting. The research questions are: (1) Do attitudes toward homosexuality differ significantly among Generations X, Y, and Z? (2) How is sexual orientation distributed among these generations? The hypothesis states: There is no significant difference in attitudes toward homosexuality among Generations X, Y, and Z.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to investigate and compare attitudes toward homosexuality and self-reported sexual orientation across three distinct generational cohorts. The methodology was structured to collect standardized numerical data from a defined sample at a single point in time, allowing for the statistical analysis of group differences. The following sections detail the participant demographics, the validated instruments used for measurement, and the systematic procedure followed for data collection and ethical safeguarding.

### Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed to compare generational cohorts at a single time point.

### Participants

A convenience sample of 120 participants was recruited, divided equally among Generation X (born 1965–1980,  $n=40$ ), Generation Y (born 1981–1996,  $n=40$ ), and Generation Z (born 1997–2012,  $n=40$ ). The sample comprised 55 males (45.83%) and 65 females (54.16%). All participants were required to be within the specified age ranges; others were excluded.

### Measures

Demographic Data Sheet: Collected information on age, gender, and generational cohort. Homosexuality Attitude Scale (HAS; Kite & Deaux, 1986): A 21-item scale measuring stereotypes, misconceptions, and anxieties about homosexuals on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicate more positive attitudes. The scale demonstrates high internal consistency ( $\alpha > .92$ ) and good test-retest reliability ( $r = .71$ ).

Sexual Orientation Scale (SOS; Sagayaraj & Gopal, 2020): A 28-item scale assessing sexual orientation across four dimensions (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual) via a 4-point Likert scale. It shows strong test-retest reliability ( $r = .96$ ) and good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .71-.88$ ).

### Procedure

After obtaining informed consent, participants completed the questionnaires online via a Google Form in December 2023. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured. Data collection adhered to ethical guidelines, prioritizing participant autonomy and privacy.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic and sexual orientation data. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare mean attitude scores across the three generations, followed by a Tukey post hoc test to identify specific group differences. The significance level was set at  $p < .05$ .

**Analysis of Results**

In this section, the collected data is transferred into estimable evidence about the differences among generations, using ANOVA to compare variances across the means of different groups. These tests help determine if the variability between group means is significantly different. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS. These methods help to find out the attitude towards homosexuality and sexual orientation among Generations X, Y and Z. The result and discussion in research are assigning meaning to the collected information and determining the conclusion, significance, and implications of findings. Results of this statistical analysis are given below.

Table 1 Demographic data sheet.

Demographic details	N	Percentage
Age Generation X,Y and Z(1965-2012)	120	100%
Gender Male	55	45.83%
Female	65	54.16%
Generations Generation X	40	33.3%
Generation Y	40	33.3%
Generation Z	40	33.3%

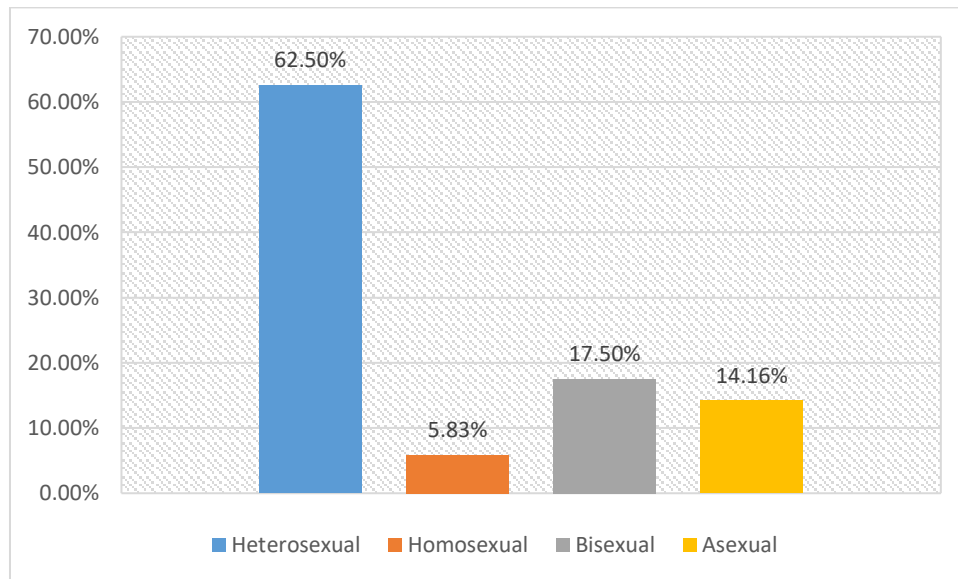
Table 1 shows the sample comprised 120 participants divided equally among Generations X, Y, and Z (n=40 each). A slight gender imbalance was noted, with 65 female (54.16%) and 55 male (45.83%) participants, which may be a consideration in interpreting the attitudinal results.

**Table 2 Organization of subject according to sexual orientation.**

	N	Percentage
Heterosexual	75	62.5%
Homosexual	7	5.83%
Bisexual	21	17.5%
Asexual	17	14.16%

Table 2 reveals a notable distribution of self-reported sexual orientation within the sample, with a significant majority of participants identifying as heterosexual (62.5%, n=75). Non-heterosexual identities

collectively accounted for 37.5% of the sample, with bisexuality being the most common (17.5%, n=21), followed by asexuality (14.16%, n=17), and homosexuality representing the smallest proportion (5.83%, n=7).



**Figure 1 Organization of subject according to sexual orientation.**

**Table 3 Mean, Standard Deviation, and One-Way ANOVA for Attitude Towards Homosexuality Across Generations**

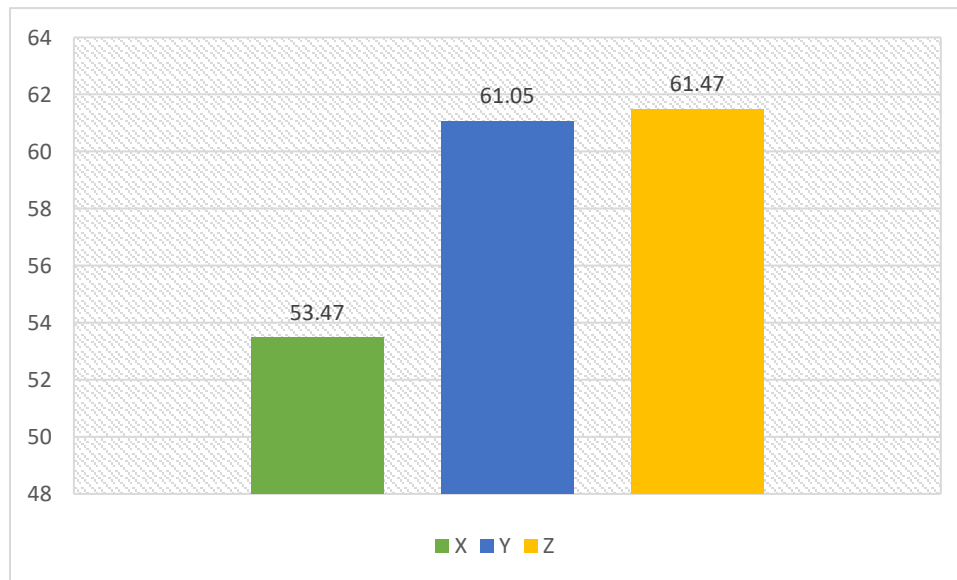
Generation	M	SD	F	*p*
X	53.47	11.63	8.493	<.001
Y	61.05	10.49		
Z	61.47	10.49		

Table 3 reveals the results of the one-way ANOVA presented in Table 3 reveal a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward homosexuality across the three generational cohorts,  $F = 8.493$ ,  $p < .001$ . Specifically, Generation X reported the least positive attitudes ( $M = 53.47$ ,  $SD = 11.63$ ), while Generations Y ( $M = 61.05$ ,  $SD = 10.49$ ) and Z ( $M = 61.47$ ,  $SD = 10.49$ )

**Table 4 Post Hoc Pairwise Comparisons (Scheffé’s Test) for Attitude Towards Homosexuality Scores**

Group (I)	Group (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	*p*-value
Gen X	Gen Y	-7.58*	2.34	.006
Gen X	Gen Z	-8.00*	2.34	.004
Gen Y	Gen Z	-0.42	2.34	.984

Note. The mean difference is significant at the  $*p* < .05$  level.



**Figure 2 Attitude towards Homosexuality Across Generations**

## DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

The results of this study provide clear empirical evidence for a significant generational divide in attitudes toward homosexuality within the collectivistic cultural context examined. The primary finding, that Generation X (born 1965–1980) holds markedly less positive attitudes than Generations Y (1981–1996) and Z (1997–2012), strongly aligns with global trends and theoretical expectations regarding social change (Diamond, 2000). The absence of a significant difference between the mean scores of Generations Y and Z suggests that the most substantial attitudinal shift may have occurred between Generation X and the millennial generation, with acceptance stabilizing at a higher level among subsequent cohorts. This could indicate a **plateau effect** in attitude liberalization, where exposure to LGBTQ+ rights movements and digital media normalization has established a new, more inclusive baseline for younger generations (Wuestenenk et al., 2022).

The distribution of sexual orientation in the sample offers another critical lens for interpretation. The overwhelming majority of participants identified as heterosexual (62.5%), with only a small minority openly identifying as homosexual (5.83%). While this could reflect the actual demographic distribution, within a collectivistic framework it is more plausibly interpreted as a consequence of **persistent stigma and disclosure risk** (Ng et al., 2023). The social and familial pressures characteristic of such cultures likely discourage open homosexual identification, potentially leading individuals to adopt other non-heterosexual labels (e.g., bisexual, asexual) or to conceal their orientation entirely. This context makes the significantly more positive attitudes of younger generations particularly noteworthy, as it suggests a growing cultural tolerance that may not yet fully translate into safe conditions for open self-identification. These generational differences can be attributed to distinct sociocultural exposures. Generation X came of age during a period when homosexuality was largely pathologized or invisible in mainstream discourse. In contrast, Generations Y and Z have been socialized in an era of increasing legal recognition, visible LGBTQ+ representation in media, and peer-driven norms of diversity and inclusion, facilitated by the internet (Sevilla & Sanchez, 2020). This exposure appears to have effectively reduced prejudice, supporting contact hypothesis principles and the normalization of sexual diversity.

The use of convenience sampling restricts the generalizability of the findings. The cross-sectional design captures attitudes at one moment, precluding causal conclusions about intra-individual attitude change over the life course. Furthermore, the gender imbalance in the sample (more female participants) is a significant consideration, as research consistently shows that women tend to report more positive attitudes toward homosexuality than men (Harbaugh & Lindsey, 2015). This may have somewhat inflated the overall positivity of the attitude scores. Finally, despite assurances of anonymity, the potential for social desirability bias remains, especially on a sensitive topic within a collectivistic setting.

In conclusion, this study confirms that generational membership is a powerful predictor of attitudes toward homosexuality, with a clear gap separating Generation X from later cohorts. This highlights the profound impact of evolving sociocultural environments on prejudice reduction. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and more diverse, representative sampling to trace the trajectory of these attitudes and explore the complex interplay between public acceptance and the private experience of sexual identity in different cultural contexts.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study provides clear evidence of a significant generational divide in attitudes toward homosexuality within a collectivistic cultural setting. The central conclusion is that Generation X holds markedly less positive attitudes than Generations Y and Z, confirming that sociocultural evolution—including increased visibility of LGBTQ+ rights, digital media exposure, and shifting social norms—has substantially shaped intergenerational outlooks. The attitudinal similarity between Generations Y and Z suggests a potential plateau in the liberalization of views, indicating that the most pronounced shift may have occurred with the millennial generation.

A secondary, critical conclusion pertains to the disparity between measured attitudes and self-reported identity. While younger generations exhibit greater acceptance, the very low proportion of participants openly identifying as homosexual (5.83%) underscores the persistent power of social stigma in a collectivistic context. This indicates that progressive attitudes among the young have not yet fully translated into an environment perceived as safe for open disclosure, highlighting a gap between public tolerance and private identity management.

The findings carry important implications for policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals. Tailored interventions are necessary, with educational and awareness programs specifically designed for older generations to address ingrained biases, while support systems must be strengthened to help younger individuals navigate the conflict between personal identity and familial or communal expectations.

This research validates the role of generational cohort as a key determinant of attitudes toward homosexuality. It illustrates both the progress made through socio-cultural change and the enduring challenges faced by sexual minorities in contexts where community and tradition exert strong influence. Future longitudinal research is recommended to trace the evolution of these attitudes and to further explore the complex relationship between shifting societal views and individual identity formation.

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