STUDENT'S ATTITUDES TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY

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Abstract

Abstract People's attitudes toward homosexuality, especially student's attitudes, have constituted the focus of many studies conducted around the world. The paper aims to measure the attitudes towards the homosexuality of the students of Psychology and Social Work branches, studying for a Bachelor degree in the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania. In addition, the paper aims to analyze the impact of students' study programme on their attitudes toward homosexuality, the impact of students' academic course, the impact of students' residence, and the impact of students' age on their attitudes towards homosexuality. This study however, made use of a questionnaire. The measuring instrument used in the study was "Attitudes Towards Sexual Orientation: An Adaption of Herek's ATLG Survey" (the adaption is made by Benjamin J. Stefonik). The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed by means of the SPSS program, variant 20. 20.

20. 249 students of the Psychology and Social Work branches of Bachelor degree, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, participated in the study. Also, 128 students (51,4% of students participating in the study) were students of the Psychology branch, while 121 students (48,6%) were students of the Social Work branch. The paper concluded that there is an existence of prejudice attitudes towards homosexuality. The students of Psychology branch have more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students of Social Work branch. Nevertheless, this relationship is not statistically significant. It is very important that there should be a gross improvement on significant. It is very important that there should be a gross improvement on student's attitudes towards homosexuality. This is especially for the students of Social Work branch, the students of the second and third academic courses, and for students who live in the city. Consequently, the major strategies for improving student's attitudes towards homosexuality were recommended.

Keywords: Attitudes, sexual orientation, homosexuality

Introduction

According to APA website, "Sexual orientation refers to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, women, or both sexes. Sexual orientation also refers to a person's sense of identity based on those attractions, related behaviours, and membership in a community of others who share those attractions. Research over several decades has demonstrated that sexual orientation ranges along a continuum, from exclusive attraction to the other sex to exclusive attraction to the same sex"

demonstrated that sexual orientation ranges along a continuum, from exclusive attraction to the other sex to exclusive attraction to the same sex" (American Psychological Association, 2015). Living in a heterosexist society inevitably poses challenges to people with non-heterosexual orientations. Many lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, faces social stigma, heterosexism, violence, and discrimination (Herek, 1991a, 2009; Mays & Cochran, 2001; Meyer, 2003). Herek (1995) defined heterosexism as "the ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behaviour, identity, relationship, or community" (p. 321). Research regarding the attitudes toward gay men and lesbians often used the term "homophobia" to characterize a negative attitude schema towards homosexuals (Herek, 2004). However, recently the term has come under criticism due to its implication that anti-gay prejudice is based on fear (Herek, 2004). As a result, Herek (2004) has introduce the term "sexual prejudice" to more accurately represent negative attitudes toward sexually stigmatized groups such as gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals. Sexual prejudice is operationally defined as negative attitudes based on sexual orientation (cited by Stefonik B.J.). Homophobia: Any belief system that supports negative myths and stereotypes about homosexual people, or any of the varieties of negative attitudes that arise from fear or dislike of homosexuality. It is an irrational fear of, or aversion to homosexuals and homosexuality. Homophobes react to homosexuals as enemies to be feared, hated, and actively repressed (Mihalik, 1001)

homosexuals as enemies to be feared, hated, and actively repressed (Mihalik, 1991).

Heterosexism: A belief system that values heterosexuality as superior to, and/or more natural than homosexuality. It does not acknowledge the existence of nonheterosexuals. It believes that heterosexuality is normative and that nonheterosexuality is deviant and intrinsically less desirable. Heterosexists react to homosexuals as unfortunate and devalued individuals

(Mihalik, 1991) (cited by Banks C. (2003)). Heterosexism is the ideology that only heterosexual attraction patterns and lifestyles are acceptable. It holds up heterosexuality as the only normal option, devalues homosexuality, and relegates it into a category with

sexual deviance (Herek, 1990). The phenomenon occurs at all levels from the cultural to the individual. At the cultural level, gays and lesbians are placed squarely outside of the model life course and lifestyle. Cultural heterosexism (Herek, 1990) involves the social phenomenon that creates and maintains anti-homosexual sentiment. At the cultural level, heterosexism is maintains anti-homosexual sentiment. At the cultural level, heterosexism is manifest by phenomena such as the denial of marriage rights to gays and lesbians. These kinds of biases filter through social institutions and face-to-face interactions all the way down to each person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Heterosexism at the individual level and psychological heterosexism, involves a specific person's homonegative belief and value system, as well as their cognitive affective and behavioral reactions to gays and lesbians. This includes homonegative belief systems, and acceptance of anti-homosexual word and deed (Zachary L. Tureau B.S. (2003)).

anti-homosexual word and deed (Zachary L. Tureau B.S. (2003)). Research has demonstrated that attitudes toward gay men and lesbians are multidimensional and that to fully understand anti-gay prejudice, these different aspects of people's attitudes and perceptions should be considered (see LaMar & Kite, 1998; Kite & Whitley, 1996). Because attitudes toward homosexuality can serve different functions for different people (Herek, 1986); anti-gay prejudice can best be understood by considering these differing perspectives (Mary E. Kite, Ball State University).

Of the most detrimental effects of homophobia is the potential negative impact on LGB mental health. In fact, it is believed that living in a homophobic society creates unique stressors for LGB individuals (Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter, & Gwadz, 2002). Lewis, Derlega, Clarke, and Kuang (2006) found that stigma consciousness was related to intrusive thoughts, stress, and negative mood in their lesbian sample (Mireshghi S.I., Matsumoto D. (2008)).

Methodology of Preparation and Development of this Paper The survey carried out in 39 countries finds broad acceptance of homosexuality in North America, the European Union, and much of Latin America. However, there was equally a widespread rejection in predominantly Muslim nations and in Africa, as well as in parts of Asia and Russia. Opinions based on the acceptability of homosexuality were divided in Israel, Poland, and Bolivia. In addition, attitudes towards homosexuality have been fairly stable in recent years, except in South Korea, the United States, and in Canada. Hence, the percentage which says that homosexuality should be accepted by society has grown by at least ten percentage points since 2007. These are among the key findings of a new survey by the Pew Research Center conducted in 39 countries among 37,653 respondents from March 2 to May 1, 2013 (Andrew Kohut A. (2013)).

The challenges faced by lesbians and gay men in university communities have become the major focus of research in recent years in the United States of America. Herek (1995) found evidence of prejudice and discrimination against lesbians and gay men on campuses. Evans and D'Augelli (1996) found the campus environment to be unwelcoming and hostile towards lesbians and gay men. Wong, McCreary, Carpenter, Engle and Korchynsky (1999) reported that heterosexual students have negative attitudes towards lesbians and gay men. Subsequently, several studies (Griffin, 1998; Lance, 2002) have shown that verbal and behavioural hostility are directed towards lesbians and gay men. Also, Peters (2003) supported these findings (Arndt M., Bruin G. (2006)). In recent years, researchers have documented that attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women are becoming more positive, particularly in university settings. Altemeyer (2001) reported that Canadian university students' scores on the Attitudes Toward Homosexuals Scale (ATHS; Altemeyer, 1988) were substantially more favourable in 1998 than they were

thiversity settings. Anteneyer (2001) reported that Canadian university students' scores on the Attitudes Toward Homosexuals Scale (ATHS; Altemeyer, 1988) were substantially more favourable in 1998 than they were in 1984 (when scores hovered around the mid-point of the scale), indicating that feelings of hostility and rejection toward gay men and lesbian women have lessened to the point where most students report that they accept these sexual minority groups. Other Canadian and American researchers who have recently measured university students' attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women also have reported that students' attitudes toward sexual minorities were generally positive (Kilianski, 2003; Mohipp & Morry, 2004; Morrison et al., in press; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Theodore & Basow, 2000); however, whether this change in students' self-reported attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women over time is actually reflective of greater tolerance for sexual minorities among students is arguable since research exploring the occurrence of anti-gay/lesbian behaviours suggests that homonegativity has not disappeared from university and college campuses (Jewell L.M. (2007)). Investigators such as D'Augelli and Rose (1990), Engstrom and Sedlacek (1997), Hensley (1995), Kite (1984), Nelson and Krieger (1997), Reinhardt (1997), Rey and Gibson (1997), Simoni (1996), Waldo (1998), and Whitney (2002) have linked a variety of personal traits to feelings of homophobia. Gender-roles and gender, self-esteem, education level, race/ethnicity, religiosity, geographical area of residence, political

homophobia. Gender-roles and gender, self-esteem, education level, race/ethnicity, religiosity, geographical area of residence, political preference, income level, and exposure to homosexuals can influence people's feelings about homosexuals. Overall, women are more accepting of homosexuality than men. Men are people who have high self-esteem; a higher level of education; higher income; more exposure to homosexuals; who are less active in organized religion; who are identified as being politically moderate or liberal; who are not of an ethnic minority; and who

live in less conservative areas of the country and/or in more urban settings (Smith M.S. (2004)).

(Smith M.S. (2004)). Sakalli and Ugurlu (2001) conducted the first study measuring people's attitudes toward homosexuality in Turkey. Hence, their study shows that in general, Turkish college students had negative attitudes towards homosexuality, and social contact with homosexual individuals decreased the prejudices attitudes towards homosexuals (Sakalli N. (2002)). Furthermore, many studies have been conducted all around the world. The question, naturally, arises "What is Albanian student's attitudes towards homosexuality?" However, in Albania, there are no similar studies. So, for this reason, the paper is focused on measuring student's attitudes towards homosexuality. Also, the paper is focused especially on measuring the attitudes towards the homosexuality of students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania. It is very important that future psychologists and social workers should have positive attitudes towards homosexuality. In the future, the focus of another paper will be on measuring the attitudes towards the homosexuality of all the students of the University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania.

Aims and Objectives of the Paper The main aims and objectives are:

• Measuring attitudes towards homosexuality of students of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree.

• Analyzing the impact of students' study programme (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) on their attitudes towards homosexuality.

• Analyzing the impact of students' academic course (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) on their attitudes towards homosexuality.

• Analyzing the impact of students' residence (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) on their attitudes towards homosexuality.

• Analyzing the impact of students' age (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of

Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) on their attitudes towards homosexuality. The research questions of the study include: Research Question 1: What are the attitudes towards homosexuality of students of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree? Research Question 2: What are the attitudes towards homosexuality of students of first, second, and third academic course of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree? Research Question 3: What are the attitudes towards homosexuality

Research Question 3: What are the attitudes towards homosexuality of students (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) that live in the country?

Research Question 4: What are the attitudes towards homosexuality of students (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) that live in the city?

Research Question 5: How does students' age (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) influence their attitudes toward homosexuality?

Sampling

In the study, we had the participation of 249 students of Psychology and Social Work branches, Bachelor degree, of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania. All the students who participated in the study have heterosexual orientation.

Study program	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Psychology	128	51,4%
Social Work	121	48,6%
Total	249	100,0%

	Table 1.Data	about students'	study	programme
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128 students (51,4% of students participating in the study) were students of Psychology branch, while 121 students (48,6%) were students of Social Work branch.

Academic course	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
First	77	30,9%
Second	95	38,2%
Third	77	30,9%
Total	249	100,0%

Table 2. Data about students' academic course

77 students (30,9% of students participating in the study) study in the first academic course, 95 students (38,2%) study in the second academic course, and 77 students (30,9%) study in the third academic course.

Gender	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Male	27	10,8%
Female	221	88,8%
Missing	1	0,4%
Total	249	100,0%

Table 3. Data about students' gender

27 students (10,8% of students participating in the study) were male, 221 students (88,8%) were female, while 1 student (0,4%) has not given his/her gender.

Age	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
18 years aged	21	8,5%
19 years aged	65	26,1%
20 years aged	85	34,1%
21 years aged	63	25,3%
22 years aged	9	3,6%
23 years aged	3	1,2%
24 years aged	1	0,4%
29 years aged	1	0,4%
Missing	1	0,4%
Total	249	100,0%

Table 4. Data about students' age

In the study, we had the participation of students of different ages. 21 students (8,5%) of students participating in the study) were 18 years aged, 65 students (26,1%) were 19 years aged, 85 students (34,1%) were 20 years aged, 63 students (25,3%) were 21 years aged, 9 students (3,6%) were 22 years aged, 3 students (1,2%) were 23 years aged, 1 student (0,4%) was 24 years old, 1 student (0,4%) was 29 years old, and 1 student (0,4%) did not give his/her age.

Tuble 5. Dulu ubout students Testaenee				
Residence	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency		
Country	73	29,3%		
City	175	70,3%		
Missing	1	0,4%		
Total	249	100,0%		

Table 5. Data about students' residence

73 students (29,3% of students participating in the study) live in the country, 175 students (70,3%) live in the city, while 1 student (0,4%) has not expressed where he/she lives.

Degree of recognition	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Not at all	193	77,5%
A little	42	16,9%
More	10	4%
Missing	4	1,6%
Total	249	100,0%

Table 6. Data about students' degree of recognition to a homosexual individual

The students in general, have different degrees of recognition for a homosexual individual, from not at all to more. 193 students (77,5% of students participating in the study) do not recognize any homosexual individual, 42 students (16,9%) have a little degree of recognition, 10 students (4%) have more recognition, while 4 students (1,6%) have not given any response.

Apparatus/Materials

attitudes toward homosexuals).

Consequently, the questionnaires were completed by the students themselves. Also, the administration of the questionnaires and the interviews (distribution and collection) was conducted during May 2015.

Method of Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed by means of the SPSS program, variant 20. Thus, the reliability of the questionnaire, the internal reliability, and the Alpha Cronbach coefficient=0,89 was estimated. 11 questionnaires were considered as invalid, because there, the sexual orientation of the students that fulfilled these questionnaires was not given.

Piloting Stage

From the beginning, the translation of the questionnaire in Albanian language was done by me, while my colleague did the translation in English Language. Afterwards, it was concluded in a single variant which was checked with the students. Hence, this was done so as to get feedback from

them if they had any word or phrase that they did not understand or was not clearly translated. After getting their opinions, it was concluded in the final version in Albanian language, and the questionnaires were distributed to the students. Consequently, the questionnaires were completed by 50 heterosexual students of the second course, Psychology branch, Bachelor degree, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania. 3 students (6% of students participating in the piloting phase) were males and 47 (94% of students participating in the piloting phase) were females. 11 students (22%) were 19 years aged, 31 students (62 %) were 20 years aged, 6 students (12%) were 21 years aged, 1 student (2%) was 22 years aged, and 1 student (2%) did not reflect the age. Therefore, Alpha Cronbach = 0,92.

Findings of the Study

General Data Concerning Students' Attitudes Towards Homosexuality Table 7 Data about students' attitudes toward homosexuality

Table 7. Data about students' attrades to ward noniosextanty							
					Standard	Minimum	Maximum
	Ν	Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation		
Attitudes							
	249	56,25	56	59	7,24	29	74
Valid	249						

The mean is 56,25, the median is 56, and the mode is 59. The maximum score obtained is 74 (obtained from 1 student or 0,4% of students), while the minimum score obtained is 29 (obtained from 1 student or 0,4% of students). However, the corresponding histogram is shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Data about students' attitudes



A small fraction of the values obtained is ranked in the range of values from 29 to 40 (5 students or 2%). In the range of values from 42 to 50, another portion of the results was ranked (44 students or 17,7%). Most of

the results obtained was ranked in the range of values from 51-60 (133 students or 53,4% of the students participating in the study). In the range of values from 61 to 70, another portion of the results was ranked (62 students or 24,9%). In addition, a small fraction of the values obtained was also ranked in the range of values from 71 to 74 (5 students or 2%). Thus, we can say that a prejudice attitude towards homosexuality exists.

The analysis of the Impact of Students' Study Programme on their Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

Consequently, the analysis of variance ANOVA was used in this study. Thus, it is used to examine the impact of students' study programme on the mean Survey Scale score of students.

Study programme	N deviation	Mean	Standard
Psychology	128	56,03	6,65742
Social Work	121	56,48	7,83806

 Table 8. Means and Standard deviations for students of Psychology and Social Work branches

The students of Social Work branch have a higher average of point (56,48), whereas the students of Psychology branch have a lower average of point (56,03). Nevertheless, this relationship is not statistically significant (Sig = 0,62). So, the students of Psychology branch have more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students of Social Work branch. Thus, this relationship is not statistically significant.

The Analysis of the Students' Academic Course on their Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

Academic course	Ν	Mean	Standard deviation
First academic course	77	55,61	8,00848
Second academic course	95	55,95	7,05286
Third academic course	77	57,27	6,63253

Table 9. Means and Standard deviations for students' academic course

The students of the third academic course have a higher average of point (57,27), whereas the students of the first academic course have a lower average of point (55,61). Nevertheless, this relationship is not statistically significant (Sig = 0,32). So, the students of the first academic course have

more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students of the second and third academic courses. Thus, this relationship is not statistically significant.

The Analysis of the Students' Residence on their Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

Residence	N	Mean	Standard deviation
City	175	56,42	7,64246
Country	73	55,82	6,26796

Table 10. Means and Standard deviations for students' residence

175 students live in the city, 73 students live in the country, and 1 student have not express where he/she lives. However, it is impossible to be sure about the fact if there is a significant relationship or not, about the impact of student's residence on their attitudes toward homosexuality. Hence, Sig=0,55; in addition, we can say that the students that live in the city have a higher average of point (56,42), whereas the students that live in the country have a lower average of point (55,82). Nevertheless, this relationship is not statistically significant. So, the students that live in the country have more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students that live in the city. Thus, this relationship is not statistically significant.

The Analysis of Student's Age on their Attitudes Towards Homosexuality

The relationship between students' age and their attitudes toward homosexuality is calculated using Pearson correlation. There is a positive correlation, Sig. = 0,121. However, there is an association between the average of points and students 'age. The increasing of student's age is associated with the increasing of students test points. Therefore, the older students are more prejudiced against homosexuality.

Conclusion

Students' attitudes of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, towards homosexuality is not good. Thus, there is an existence of prejudice attitudes towards homosexuality. The students of Psychology branch, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree, have more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students of Social Work branch, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree. However, this relationship is not statistically significant. The students of the first academic course have a more positive attitudes toward homosexuality than the students of the second and third academic courses (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree). Nevertheless, this relationship is not statistically significant. The students that live in the country have more positive attitudes towards homosexuality than the students that live in the city (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty, this relationship is not statistically significant. Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between students' age (for Psychology and Social Work branches of Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree). Consequently, this relationship is not statistically significant. Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between students' age (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) and their attitudes towards homosexuality. In addition, the older students are more prejudiced against homosexuality. homosexuality.

Recommendations

Educating all people about sexual orientation and homosexuality is likely to diminish anti-gay prejudice. Accurate information about homosexuality is especially important to young people who are first discovering and seeking to understand their sexuality, whether homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual. Fears that access to such information will make

bisexual, or heterosexual. Fears that access to such information will make more people gay have no validity; information about homosexuality does not make someone gay or straight (American Psychological Association, 2004). It is very important that the students of Psychology and Social Work (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree) should have good attitudes toward homosexuality. Therefore, it is very important that there should be improvement in student's attitudes toward homosexuality, especially for the students of Social Work branch. This is also necessary for the students of the caccord and third academic courses, and for the students that live in the city students of Social Work branch. This is also necessary for the students of the second and third academic courses, and for the students that live in the city (for Psychology and Social Work branches of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, Bachelor degree). Numerous studies have found that interpersonal contact is a reliable predictor of more positive attitudes towards gay men and lesbians (Glassner & Owen, 1976; Herek & Glunt, 1993; Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Herek, 2000; Lance, 1992). Morin and Garfinkle (1978) found that attitudes towards

homosexuals can be altered by merely meeting a homosexual or reading an article that depicts homosexuality in a positive way. According to the social contact theory, exposure to information about homosexuality or actually meeting a homosexual individual can positively affect an individual's attitude toward homosexuals (Lance, 1994). Direct contact with a

attitude toward homosexual individual can positively affect an individual s attitude toward homosexuals (Lance, 1994). Direct contact with a homosexual is believed to dispel myths, reduce fear, promote mutual understanding, and reduce prejudice towards homosexual individuals (Benjamin J. Stefonik, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire). A number of studies have shown that homophobia can be reduced through gay and lesbian speakers' panels, role-playing exercises, and through knowing a gay or a lesbian person (Aitken, 1993; McCleskey, 1991; McClintock, 1992; Papas, 2002; Reinhardt, 1994). Reinhardt (1997) found that college students who had gay and lesbian friends and acquaintances or who had positive interactions with gays and lesbians were less likely to have homophobic attitudes. In addition, Pirtle (1994) found that college students had less negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians after interacting with a panel of gay and lesbian people (Maher M.J. (2004)). An effective strategy for improving student's attitudes toward homosexuality will be the organization of different meetings with homosexual individuals or the organization of various meetings with the representatives of their organizations. The Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychology and Social Work, University "Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkodër, Albania, tries to organise such meetings. For example, the training group of PINK Embassy in collaboration with our Faculty and in collaboration with the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination,

collaboration with the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, held an open lecture in May 2015 about LGBTI theme. A lot of students of Psychology and Social Work branches attended the open lecture and there were many discussions about this topic. It is very important that different academic subjects on lots of topics that address homosexuality should be considered. Thus, this would enable students to have more knowledge about homosexuality and this will improve

their attitudes towards homosexuality.

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