Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures

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Homophobia Scale

Publication details
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Published online on: 12 Aug 2010

How to cite: Lester W. Wright, Henry E. Adams, Jeffrey Bernat. 12 Aug 2010, Homophobia Scale from: Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures Routledge
Accessed on: 13 Jul 2023

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When/if I am in a relationship, I feel comfortable talking about my lesbian partner.
I feel comfortable about the idea of another woman making an advance toward me.
I feel comfortable at lesbian-centered events or places.
I feel comfortable in social situations with other lesbians.
I have stopped myself from coming out because no heterosexuals are truly accepting. [R]
I have very little in common with other lesbians. [R]
It is important for me to be part of the lesbian community.
It is important to have people in my life who know I am a lesbian.
I am comfortable being a lesbian.
I feel comfortable thinking about my homosexuality.
I sometimes feel disappointed in myself for being a lesbian. [R]
I sometimes feel embarrassed to be a lesbian. [R]
I would prefer to be heterosexual. [R]
Being a lesbian is all right when you are young, but I worry how people will perceive me as an older lesbian. [R]
Children should be taught that being gay or lesbian is normal.
I find myself making negative comments about other lesbians. [R]
I sometimes think heterosexual people’s judgments of lesbians are, at least in part, justified. [R]
I think of lesbians as sexually predatory. [R]
I wish other lesbians would not flaunt their lesbianism. [R]
It is understandable that people judge lesbians who do not dress or act "straight." [R]
It is understandable that some people believe that lesbians are not worthy of the same treatment as other women. [R]
Lesbians should try to look as non-offensive as possible. [R]
Lesbians who have a very masculine appearance make me uncomfortable. [R]
Most lesbians grow out of their lifestyles. [R]

Note. [R] = reverse-scored items.

The Homophobia Scale (HS) was developed to assess the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of homophobia.

**Description**

The HS consists of 25 statements to which respondents answer on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The majority of the homophobia scales currently in use measure attitudes toward gay and lesbian individuals and what has been referred to as homonegativity, but do not capture the entire construct of homophobia. The inclusion of items that assess social avoidance and aggressive acting, in addition to the attitudinal items found on many homophobia measures, differentiates the HS from other scales.

The participants for the development and validation studies ($N = 321$ for the initial field trial and $N = 122$ for test-retest reliability) were students from a large midwestern university. Their average age was 22.38 ($SD = 4.12$).

**Homophobia Scale**

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The mean total score for the scale based on 145 participants was 32.04 (SD = 19.76). The mean score for the male participants (n = 47) was 41.38 (SD = 19.32). The mean score for the female participants (n = 98) was 27.56 (SD = 18.44). It is recommended that users of the scale conduct statistics on their samples to determine cut scores for high and low responding.

The scale contains three factors that accounted for 68.69% of the scale’s variance. The first factor, Behavioral/Negative Affect, accounted for 40.88% of the scale’s variance and contained 10 items that assess primarily negative affect and avoidance behaviors. The mean score for Factor 1 = 10.79 (SD = 8.22). The second factor, Affect/Behavioral Aggressive, accounted for 23.05% of the scale’s variance and contained 10 items that assess primarily aggressive behavior and negative affect. The mean score for Factor 2 = 14.28 (SD = 12.51). The third factor, Cognitive Negativism, accounted for 4.77% of the scale’s variance and contained five items that assess negative attitudes and cognitions. The mean score for Factor 3 = 7.10 (SD = 4.84).

**Response Mode and Timing**

Respondents can indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements by circling the number on the Likert scale that most closely matches their thoughts, feelings, or behavior. The scale can be completed in approximately 5 to 7 minutes.

**Scoring**

A total score and three subscale scores can be calculated for the scale.

1. Reverse score the following items: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25 (to reverse score the items 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1). Use these reverse scores to calculate total score and factor subscale scores.

2. To calculate the total scale score: Add the responses to items 1–25; then subtract 25 from the total scale score. The range of scores will be between 0 and 100, with a score of 0 being the least homophobic and 100 being the most homophobic.

3. To calculate the subscale (factor) scores:
   - Factor 1 (Behavior/Negative Affect): Add items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 22; then subtract 10. Scores should range between 0 and 40.
   - Factor 2 (Affect/Behavioral Aggression): Add items 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 25; then subtract 10. Scores should range between 0 and 40.
   - Factor 3 (Cognitive Negativism): Add items 3, 8, 16, 18, and 20; then subtract 5. Scores should range between 0 and 20.

**Reliability**

The scale yielded an overall α reliability coefficient of \( r = .94, p < .01 \) and a 1-week test-retest reliability coefficient of \( r = .96, p < .01 \).

**Validity**

Concurrent validity was established using the Index of Homophobia (IHP; Hudson & Ricketts, 1980). A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed using overall scores for the IHP and the HS. The results yielded a significant correlation, \( r = .66, p < .01 \), indicating the two scales are measuring a similar construct. The moderately strong correlation suggests the HS measures something different than the IHP.

**Other Information**

A copy of the scale can be obtained at no cost from the corresponding author. Appropriate citation of the scale (Wright, Adams, & Bernat, 1999) is requested.

**References**


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**Exhibit**

**Homophobia Scale**

This questionnaire is designed to measure your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with regard to homosexuality. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item by circling the number after each question as follows:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
1. Gay people make me nervous.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
2. Gay people deserve what they get.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
3. Homosexuality is acceptable to me.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
4. If I discovered a friend was gay I would end the friendship.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
5. I think homosexual people should not work with children.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
6. I make derogatory remarks about gay people.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
7. I enjoy the company of gay people.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
8. Marriage between homosexual individuals is acceptable.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
9. I make derogatory remarks like “faggot” or “queer” to people I suspect are gay.
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
10. It does not matter to me whether my friends are gay or straight.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
11. It would not upset me if I learned that a close friend was homosexual.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
12. Homosexuality is immoral.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
13. I tease and make jokes about gay people.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
14. I feel that you cannot trust a person who is homosexual.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
15. I fear homosexual persons will make sexual advances towards me.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
16. Organizations which promote gay rights are necessary.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
17. I have damaged property of gay persons, such as “keying” their cars.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
18. I would feel comfortable having a gay roommate.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
19. I would hit a homosexual for coming on to me.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
20. Homosexual behavior should not be against the law.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
21. I avoid gay individuals.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
22. It does not bother me to see two homosexual people together in public.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
23. When I see a gay person I think, “What a waste.”
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
24. When I meet someone I try to find out if he/she is gay.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
25. I have rocky relationships with people that I suspect are gay.
    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |