

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 503

CG 031 289

AUTHOR Hsu, Daniel; Hui, Ming; Waters, Judith A.
TITLE Filial Piety and Sexual Prejudice in Chinese Culture.
PUB DATE 2001-08-00
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Psychological Association (109th, San Francisco, CA, August 24-28, 2001).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Attitude Measures; *Bias; *College Students; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Homosexuality; Interpersonal Relationship; Lesbianism; Sex Differences
IDENTIFIERS *Filial Piety; Taiwan; Tolerance

ABSTRACT

The goal of this research was to explore how filial piety and interpersonal contact with gay persons relates to attitudes toward lesbians and gay men in a Chinese sample from Taiwan. Sex differences of respondents and the intensity differences of attitudes toward lesbians and gay men were also investigated. The participants were 187 undergraduates (68 males, 119 females) from a major university in Taiwan. The Filial Piety Scale and the Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men Scale were employed. The results indicated that respondents' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men were correlated with filial piety and interpersonal contact. However, the contact effect only holds for men, not for women. In addition, men hold more intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men than do women. These findings support the notion that internalized filial piety relates to Chinese people's intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. Thus, negative attitudes toward gay persons serve a functional purpose. (Contains 10 references.) (Author/JDM)

Filial Piety and Sexual Prejudice in Chinese Culture

Daniel Hsu, Ming-Hui
New York University
Email: mhh218@nyu.edu

Judith A. Waters
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Email: judithawater@aol.com

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ming-Hui Hsu

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Abstract

The goal of this research was to explore how filial piety and interpersonal contact with gay persons relates to attitudes toward lesbians and gay men in a Chinese sample from Taiwan. Sex differences of respondents and the intensity differences of attitudes toward lesbians and gay men were also investigated. The participants were 187 undergraduates (68 males, 119 females) from a major University in Taiwan. The Filial Piety Scale (Ho & Lee, 1974) and The Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (Herek, 1988) were employed. The results indicate that respondents' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men are correlated with filial piety and interpersonal contact. However, the contact effect only holds for men, not for women. In addition, men hold more intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men than do women. These findings support the notion that internalized filial piety relates to Chinese people's intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. Thus, negative attitudes toward gay persons serve a functional purpose (Herek, 1986, 1987, 1994).

Introduction

Same-gender sexual behaviors were tolerated in classic China (Hinsch, 1990; Ruan, 1991). “Homosexuality” as a medical term of was probably translated and introduced into China in the late nineteenth century (Lau & Ng, 1989). Chinese people learned about the “sickness” of homosexuality in the process of modernization or westernization in the twentieth century. The modern concepts of lesbians and gay men were imported into Chinese societies in the past few decades (Hinsch, 1990). Chinese people felt puzzled about the concepts of lesbians and gay men because these ideas had been constructed in the context of modern western societies, which are quite different from traditional Chinese cultures (Chen, 1995). In fact, lesbians and gay men in modern China have been seen as a crime against social morality, a mental illness, a western idea that does not exist in China, or the result of western influences (Ruan, 1991).

Confucianism, a Chinese philosophy and religion, has shaped Chinese people’s social behaviors for centuries, and continues to do so today. Filial piety is ranked as the highest virtue within Confucian doctrine, which emphasizes the production of male offspring to maintain the family name as well as to offer sacrifices after death (Wawrytko, 1993). Consequently, since the gay lifestyle is a threat to the continuity of the family, it is difficult for people who endorse filial piety to accept lesbians and gay men.

The goal of this research is to explore how filial piety relates to Chinese people’s attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. In addition, the influence of prior interpersonal contact with lesbians and gay men, sex differences of respondents, and the intensity differences of negative attitudes toward lesbians and gay men were investigated.

Method

Participants: Participants were 187 undergraduates (68 males, 119 females) from Fu Jen University in Taiwan. The mean age was 21.0 (it would be 20.0 in the American reckoning). The percentage of participants knowing at least one relative, friend, or close acquaintance who is gay was 38.0%.

Procedure: Two scales in Chinese form were employed in this study. The Chinese version of The Filial Piety Scale (FP) was developed by Ho and Lee (1974). The translation from English to Chinese of the short version of The Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG, Herek, 1998) was done by the first author and was reviewed by a social psychologist who is proficient in both English and Chinese well and is familiar with gay issues.

Participants were asked to complete the two scales and one paged demographic information at various campus settings including libraries, classrooms, and dormitories during October and November 1999. The data were collected by the first author and two colleagues.

Results

Using a sample of Chinese students, the research found that:

- (1) Regardless of gender, respondents with more positive attitudes toward filial piety held more intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and toward gay men than did those with less positive attitudes toward filial piety.
- (2) Male, but not female, respondents with interpersonal contact with gay people held more positive attitudes toward lesbians and toward gay men than do those without such experiences.
- (3) Regardless of gender, respondents held more intolerant attitudes toward gay men than toward lesbians. Male respondents held more intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and toward gay men than did female respondents.

Conclusion

These findings support the notion that internalized filial piety underlies Chinese people's intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. In addition, the findings supported the validity of the functional theory of attitudes (Herek, 1986, 1987, 1994). Negative attitudes toward lesbians and gay men seem to fulfill functional need in terms of filial piety.

This study appears to be the first of its kind in Chinese societies. We offer several suggestions for future research. As the next step, replication with samples representative of the general public will be very important to determine whether the same findings would hold beyond student samples. Second, future research should explore other cultural factors that are associated with intolerant attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. Third, more sophisticated research on the effect of interpersonal contact on attitudes toward lesbians and gay men is needed. Finally, qualitative research is necessary to obtain the in-depth understanding of Chinese people's attitudes toward lesbians and gay men

Table 1

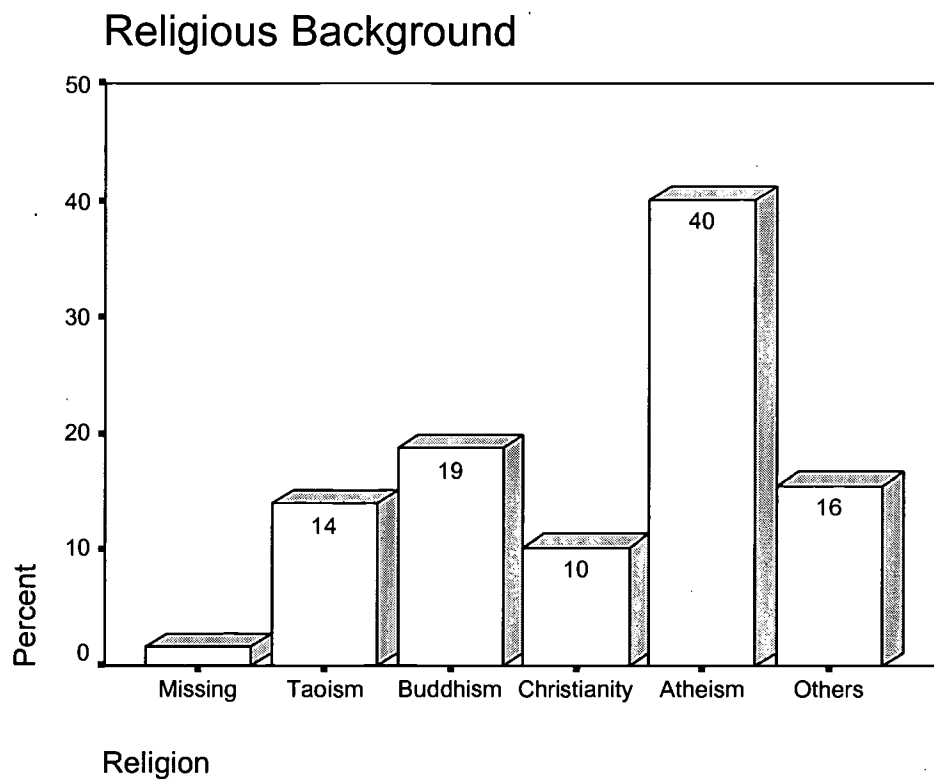
Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlation Among Filial Piety Scale, Attitudes Toward Gay men Subscale, and Attitudes Toward Lesbians Subscale

Measure	M	SD	FP	ATG	ATL
Male Participants ($n = 68$)					
FP	70.7	10.9	-	-	-
ATG	16.3	5.3	.31**	-	-
ATL	15.3	5.1	.33**	.88**	-
Female Participants ($n = 119$)					
FP	70.5	9.8	-	-	-
ATG	14.4	4.8	.20*	-	-
ATL	14.0	5.1	.18*	.94**	-

Note. FP = Filial Piety Scale (higher scores indicate more positive attitudes toward filial piety). ATG = Attitudes Toward Gay Men Subscale (higher scores indicate more intolerant attitudes toward gay men). ATL = Attitudes Toward Lesbians Subscale (higher scores indicate more intolerant attitudes toward lesbians).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Figure 1



Note. Others include folk religion (5.3%), no religion (4.3%), non-specific religion, (3.2%), more than one religion (1.6%), and I-Guan-Dau (1.1%)

References

Chen, C. S. (1995). Issues of sexual identity in an ethnic minority: The case of Chinese American lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people. In A. R. D'Augelli, & C. J. Patterson (Eds.), Lesbians, gay, and bisexual identities over the lifespan (pp. 87-101). New York: Oxford University Press.

Lau, M. P. & Ng, M. L. (1989). Homosexuality in Chinese culture. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry, 13, 465-488.

Herek, G. M. (1986). The social psychology of homophobia: Toward a practical theory. New York University Review of Law and Social Change, 14 (4), 923-934.

Herek, G. M. (1987). Can function be measured? A new perspective on the functional approach to attitudes. Social Psychology Quarterly, 50 (4), 285-303.

Herek, G. M. (1988). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: Correlates and gender differences. Journal of Sex Research, 25 (4), 451-477.

Herek, G. M. (1994). Assessing heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: A review of empirical research with the ATLG scale. In B. Green & G. M. Herek (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on lesbian and gay issues: Vol. 1. Lesbian and gay psychology: Theory, research, and clinical applications (pp. 206-230). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Hirsch, B. (1990). Passions of the cut sleeve: The male homosexual tradition in China. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Ho, D. Y. F. & Lee, L. Y. (1974). Authoritarianism and attitudes toward filial piety in Chinese teachers. Journal of Social Psychology, 92, 305-306.

Ruan, F. F. (1991). Sex in China: Studies of sexology in Chinese culture. New York: Plenum Press.

Wawrytko, S. A. (1993). Homosexuality and Chinese and Japanese Religions. In A. Swidler (Ed.), Homosexuality and world religions (pp. 199-230). Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <i>Filial Piety and Sexual Prejudice in Chinese Culture</i>	
Author(s): <i>Daniel Hsu, Ming-Hui</i> <i>Judith A. Waters</i>	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to each document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified documents, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 1



Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

Level 2A



Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

Level 2B



Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate these documents as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: <i>Ming-Hui Hsu</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>Ming-Hui Hsu</i>	
Organization/Address: <i>18 Valley Road, Madison, NJ 07940</i>	Telephone: <i>(973) 301-9099</i>	FAX: <i>(973) 301-9099</i>
	E-Mail Address: <i>mhh218@nyu.edu</i>	Date: <i>11/12/01</i>

Sign here, → please

APA '01

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of these documents from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of these documents. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse: **ERIC Counseling & Student Services
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
201 Ferguson Building
PO Box 26171
Greensboro, NC 27402-6171**