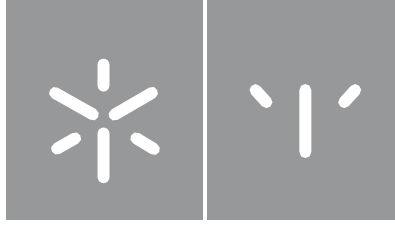




Universidade do Minho
Escola de Psicologia

Sara Manuela Cunha Dionísio

**When the Law Allows, but You
Don't Accept: Attitudes Toward
Adoption by Same-Sex Couples**



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Accept: Attitudes Toward Adoption by
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Dissertação de Mestrado

Mestrado Integrado em
Psicologia

Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação da
Professora Doutora Joana Arantes

Despacho RT - 31 /2019 - Anexo 3

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Acknowledgments

“Tudo acontece por uma razão”. Há quem acredite no destino, há quem acredite no trabalho, há quem... O mundo está repleto de pessoas que acreditam e outras que nem sempre escolhem fazê-lo. Eu acredito que o nosso percurso é construído não só por aquilo que acreditamos, mas também pela oportunidade que as pessoas que cruzam conosco nos dão de acreditar em nós.

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Um sincero MUITO OBRIGADA a todos!

Despacho RT - 31 /2019 - Anexo 4

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration.

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Braga, 04 de junho de 2021



Quando a Lei Permite, mas Tu Não Aceitas: Atitudes em Relação à Adoção por Casais do Mesmo Sexo
Resumo

Em Portugal, a legislação apoia a adoção de crianças por casais do mesmo sexo. Investigações prévias mostram que gays e lésbicas são progenitores competentes, e que os seus filhos são saudáveis e bem-ajustados os de heterossexuais. Contudo, parte da população acredita que a paternidade homossexual afeta negativamente as crianças, gerando discriminação e preconceito contra os pais e os seus filhos adotivos. O objetivo deste estudo centra-se na associação entre as atitudes em relação à adoção por casais do mesmo sexo, bem-estar e personalidade. Este estudo incluiu 1001 participantes (798 mulheres e 203 homens), com idades compreendidas entre 18 e 75 anos ($M = 32,55$; $DP = 12,50$). Os participantes responderam ao questionário sociodemográfico, à escala sobre as Atitudes em Relação à Adoção de Crianças por Homossexuais (EAACH), à Escala de Medidas de Manifestação de Bem-Estar Psicológico (EMMBEP) e ao NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). Os resultados mostraram que os indivíduos com altos níveis de envolvimento social, amabilidade, abertura à experiência e neuroticismo tendem a ter atitudes mais positivas em relação à adoção de casais do mesmo sexo. Além disso, pessoas do sexo masculino, com mais idade e mais religiosas tendem a ter atitudes mais negativas relativamente à adoção por casais homossexuais.

Palavras-chave: Adoção homoparental, Bem-estar psicológico, Idade, Personalidade, Religiosidade

When the Law Allows, but You Don't Accept: Attitudes Toward Adoption by Same-sex

Couples

Abstract

In Portugal, the current legislation supports children's adoption by same-sex couples. In addition, scientific research consistently shows that gays and lesbians are fit and capable as parents, and that their children are as psychologically healthy and well-adjusted as those raised by heterosexual couples. However, population believe that homosexual parenting adversely affects children, leading to discrimination and prejudice against homosexual parents and their adopted children. Our main goal was to study the relationship between attitudes toward adoption by same-sex couples, well-being and personality. This study included 1001 participants (798 females and 203 males), ranging from 18 to 75 years ($M = 32.55$; $SD = 12.50$). All participants completed a sociodemographic questionnaire, the Attitudes Towards Adoption of Children by Homosexuals (ATACH), the Psychological Well-Being Manifestation Measure Scale (PWBMMMS) and the NEO- Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). Results showed that individuals with high levels of social involvement, agreeableness, openness to experience, and neuroticism tended to have more positive attitudes toward same-sex adoption. In addition, men, older people, and those more religious tended to have more negative attitudes toward same-sex adoption.

Keywords: Age, Personality, Religiousness, Same-sex adoption, Well-being

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Literature Review

Family is a legal institution and a social group built typically according to social norms and legislation (Edwards & Gillies, 2012; Ionescu, 2020), being nowadays in many cultures disassociated with the matrimonial state of the parents (Dias & Reinheimer, 2013; Morales-Murillo et al., 2020). With legal advances in the defense of human rights and, consequently, LGBTQIA+ rights, homoparenthood breaks the heteronormative rules and expands the concept of family in all its duties and rights (Dias & Reinheimer, 2013; Santos et al., 2018; Tarrant & Hall, 2020). Same-sex couples can have children by normative methods, through medically assisted procreation techniques, or by adoption (Macedo, 2018).

Homosexual adoption refers to the adoption of a non-blood relative child by same-sex couples, adoption by one partner of a same-sex couple of the other's biological child (step-child adoption) and adoption by a single homosexual person (Feliciano, 2020; Goldberg & Hasenbush, 2020; Passos, 2005; Patterson, 2006; Takács et al., 2016). In Europe, the adoption of children by same-sex couples has raised a great interest (Messina & D'Amore, 2018), and a strong resistance on the part of the population, even by those that are in favor of same-sex marriage, and that accept different sexual orientations (Takács et al., 2016). In Portugal, same-sex marriage became legal under the protection of Law No. 9/2010 of May 31, and adoption of children by same-sex couples became possible under the protection of Law No. 2/2016. This law states that everyone can create a family regardless of sexual orientation (Macedo, 2018; Xavier et al., 2020). Despite this, according to the Commissioner for Human Rights (2011), Portuguese population revealed to be more accepting of same-sex couple marriage (29%) than adoption (19%). This is reflected in the most recent available statistics of 2018, showing only 3% of adoptions made by same-sex couples, whereas 85% made by heterosexual couples and 12% made by singular persons (National Council for Adoption, 2018). Nevertheless, although the percentage of same-sex adoption is small, it has been increasing gradually (New Family Social, 2016).

Takács and colleagues (2016) conducted a study involving 28 European countries, in which they ranked the level of social acceptance of same-sex adoption. More specifically, countries such as Iceland, Netherland, Sweden, Denmark and Belgium were the ones that rated higher in acceptance of this type of adoption, while Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, Poland

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and Ukraine ranked the lowest. In this ranking, Portugal was in the 18th place, after Slovenia and Russia (Takács et al., 2016).

Same-sex adoption is still a very sensitive subject, rooted in discrimination (Sani & Quaranta, 2020), and requires a greater effort from society to be incorporated and normalized (Kite & Whitley, 1996; Macedo, 2018), starting with the professionals involved in the adoption process, who may have themselves high levels of homophobia (Poisson, 2001). Research has shown that less tolerant and more negative attitudes toward gay and lesbian adoption tend to be more present in older individuals, males, black and latino-ethnicity, married, with rigid religious beliefs, lower education and conservative political ideologies (Averett et al., 2011; Chaux & Leon, 2016; Everett et al., 2019; Hicks & Lee, 2006; Jäckle & Wenzelburger, 2014; Jakobsson et al., 2013; Maftei & Holman, 2020; Roggemans et al., 2015; Sani & Quaranta, 2020). In addition, gay men have a tendency to be rated more negatively by their parental skills compared to lesbian women (Gato & Fontaine, 2015). Interestingly, heterosexual men seem to be more tolerant of lesbian adoption, whereas heterosexual women of gay adoption (Rye & Meaney, 2010). Also, individuals who contact regularly with members of the LGBTQIA community show to be more tolerant and to express more positive attitudes towards their rights (Bartos et al., 2014; Costa & Nardi, 2015; Gomes et al., 2019). Heteronormativity – the idea that heterosexuality is the default, preferred or normal form of sexuality – empowers conventional gender roles, and the maintenance of traditional families (Oswald et al., 2005). In addition, it generates a conflict in same-sex couples, resulting in self-prejudice and thoughts of inadequacy in parenthood (Kleinert et al., 2015; Messina & D’Amore, 2018; Meyer, 2013).

Attitudes towards gays and lesbians can be measured within the tripartite model of attitudes that has three components, namely cognitive, affective, and behavioral (Costa & Nardi, 2015; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Maftei & Holman, 2020; Zanna & Rempel, 1988). This model assumes that the attitudes towards same-sex parents can be manifest by thoughts and judgments about their performances (cognitive component), emotions and feelings (affective component) and past, present, and future behaviors (behavior component) (Costa & Nardi, 2015). Despite the negative attitudes towards homoparenthood, research has been showing that same-sex parenting has no negative effect on the children’s normative development (Biblarz & Stacey, 2010; Gato & Fontaine, 2010; Wendy et al., 2014), with no significant differences being found between those who are educated by homoaffective and by heteroaffective parents (Anderssen et al., 2002; Carone et al., 2020; Gato & Fontaine, 2010;

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McConnachie, 2021; Wendy et al., 2014). In fact, some studies have suggested that children raised by homoaffective parents, compared to those raised by heteroaffective parents, tend to be more capable to identify crucial aspects of childcare situations (Flaks et al., 1995), to find correct solutions to the problems encountered (Wendy et al., 2014), to be better at establishing relationships (Bigner & Jacobsen, 1989; Golombok et al., 2014), and to achieve greater outcomes (Allen et al., 2013; MacCallum & Golombok, 2004; Wendy et al., 2014). In addition, studies have indicated higher parental surveillance (Bos et al., 2007) and more positive interactions between parents and children raised in homoaffective families (Bos et al., 2007; McConnachie, 2021).

Recent studies have been showing that negative attitudes towards homoparenthood may be link to the personality traits of individuals (Ciocca et al., 2015; Petrović et al., 2020). Personality is defined as a complex accumulation of ideas and concepts that focus on unique and individual traits, tastes, preferences, forms of behavior and attitudes, displayed in contexts or brief periods (Bergner, 2020), constructing the human being (Cervone & Pervin, 2013). For example, Ciocca and colleagues' (2015) observed that psychoticism is associated with high levels of homophobia, whereas extroversion is related to lower levels of homophobia, suggesting that personality traits are related to homophobia. Petrović and colleagues' (2020) examined the relationship between authoritarianism and homophobia, finding that people with higher levels of authoritarianism tended to present higher levels of homophobia.

On the other hand, Psychological well-being is defined as a positive state (Dadfar, 2021), related to the belief in a just world (Khera et al., 2014), influenced by the self and the environment (Gómez-Lopéz et al., 2019), the experience of positive feelings (Wang et al., 2012), as well as self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, happiness, environmental mastery, satisfaction, purpose in life, personal growth and optimism (Dadfar, 2021; Gómez-Lopéz et al., 2019; Kubzansky et al., 2018; Ryff, 1989). The literature has been revealing those individuals with more positive attitudes toward social minorities tend to have higher levels psychological well-being (Khera et al., 2014).

Current study

The prejudice associated with the adoption by same-sex couples seems to be related to a defensive response to the violation of the traditional family structure, gender roles, and the misunderstanding of the moral values that will be transmitted (Rye & Meaney, 2010). Even

though there are some studies relating sociodemographic data and psychological variables with homophobia and attitudes towards same-sex marriage (Cerqueira-Santos & Bourn, 2016; D'Amore et al., 2014; Gomes et al., 2019), similar studies with attitudes towards same-sex adoption are scarce (Costa & colleagues, 2014). Also, most of the existent studies are focused on the well-being of children and parents in homoaffective families (Manning et al., 2014; Kleinert et al., 2015; Golombok et al., 2014), and not on the attitudes towards this type of adoption. Understanding the influence of different variables – such as psychological well-being and the personality factors – on attitudes towards same-sex adoption is important because can promote integration of homosexual families (Tákacs et al., 2016), encourage children's adoption without any restrictions because of parent's sexual orientation, promoting psychological well-being, increase positive attitudes and education of the theme when faced with certain personality traits associated with prejudice.

Therefore, the principal focus of the present study was to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward same-sex adoption, personality factors and levels of psychological well-being. Additionally, we aim to investigate the influence of sociodemographic variables such as sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, political party, marital status, socioeconomic level, place of residence, religiosity, religion, level of literacy, relationship status, number of children, and LGBTQIA+ family and friends, on attitudes toward same couples' adoption.

We have three main hypotheses: H1) individuals with higher levels of agreeableness, openness to experience, extroversion, and conscientiousness will have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption; H2) individuals with higher levels of neuroticism will have more negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption; and H3) individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being will have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption.

Method

Participants

The initial sample of the present study consisted of 1466 participants. After excluding those participants who answered less than 40 questions ($n = 404$) and who were less than 18 years old ($n = 7$), our final sample comprised 1001 participants (see Table 1). Of those, 797 (79.6%) were female, 201 (20.1%) were male and 3 (.3%) identified as another unspecified sex. When asked about their gender, 793 (79.2%) participants identified as female, 202 (20.2%) as male, 5 (.5%) as non-binary and 1 (.1%) as another unspecified gender. In terms of sexual

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orientation, 883 (88.2%) participants were heterosexuals, 63 (6.3%) bisexuals, 46 (4.6%) homosexuals, 5 (.5%) pansexuals and 4 (.4%) asexuals. The mean age was 32.66 ($SD = 12.47$; range: 18-75) and the mean religiousness was 2.53 ($SD = 1.80$; range: 1-7). The majority of participants were nonpartisans 269 (26.9%), or center parties (Socialist party: $n = 223$, 22.3%; Democratic Socialist Party: $n = 164$; 16.4 %). In addition, most participants were single ($n = 611$; 61.0%), were in a relationship ($n = 680$; 67.9%), did not have children ($n = 613$; 61.2%), had a low socio-economic status ($n = 537$; 53.6%), were currently living in a city ($n = 662$; 66.1%), were religious ($n = 542$; 54.1%), identified as Catholic ($n = 738$; 74.2%) and had a bachelor's degree ($n = 372$; 37.2%). Finally, whereas the majority of the participants had LGBTQIA+ friends ($n = 684$; 68.3%), they tend not to have LGBTQIA+ family members ($n = 759$; 75.8%).

Table 1
Sociodemographic Description of the Sample

Sociodemographic Variables	Mean	DP
	N	%
Sex		
Female	797	79.6
Male	201	20.1
Unspecified	3	.3
Gender		
Female	793	79.2
Male	202	20.2
Non-binary	5	.5
Unspecified	1	.1
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexuals	883	88.2
Bisexuals	63	6.3
Homosexuals	46	4.6
Pansexuals	5	.5
Asexuals	4	.4
Political Party		
Center	387	38.7

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Nonpartisans	269	26.9
Left	207	20.7
Right	71	7.1
Unspecified	67	6.7
Marital Status		
Single	611	61
Married	277	27.7
Divorced	53	5.3
Fact Union	51	5.1
Widowed	9	.9
Socioeconomic Status		
Medium-Low	254	25.4
Medium	537	53.6
Medium-High	131	13.1
Low	71	7.1
High	8	.8
Place of Residence		
City	662	66.1
Village	194	19.4
Town	129	12.9
Other	16	1.6
Level of Education		
Bachelor/ Higher Education	372	37.2
Secondary	301	30.1
Master's degree	204	20.3
PhD	81	8.1
Third Cycle	33	3.3
Second Cycle	6	.6
First Cycle	4	.4
If Religious		
Yes	542	54.1
No	459	45.9
Religion		
Catholic	738	74.2

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Atheists	166	16.7
Other	28	2.8
Spiritism	24	2.4
Agnostic	21	2.1
Buddhist	9	.9
Evangelicals	5	.5
Protestants	4	.4
With Children		
Without	613	61.2
With	388	38.8
With LGBTQIA+ Family		
Without	759	75.8
With	242	24.2
With LGBTQIA+ Friends		
With	684	68.3
Without	317	31.7

Note. N= 1001

Measures

Sociodemographic Questionnaire

Participants were asked questions regarding their sex, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, political party, socio-economic level, place where they lived (city, town, village or other), level of education, if they were religious, religion and level of religiousness (using a Likert scale from 1, *Not religious at all*, to 7, *Extremely religious*), if they had children, and whether a member of their family or group of friends was a part of the LGBTQIA+ community. Participants were also asked if they were currently involved in a relationship.

Attitudes Towards Adoption of Children by Homosexuals (ATACH) (Falcão, 2004; Portuguese version adapted by Cardeira et al., 2013)

The ATACH is a scale used to evaluate the attitudes of the population towards the adoption of children by same-sex couples. This scale consists of thirty-seven items, divided into two factors: acceptance (e.g., "If a homosexual couple is formed by two adjusted people, the child will develop normally") and rejection (e.g., "A child raised by gays will have psychological problems in the future due to the lack of a maternal figure"). Throughout this

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scale, participants are asked to select the option that corresponded to their opinion on a Likert scale from 1 (*I totally disagree*) to 7 (*I totally agree*). This scale has been shown to have a good internal consistency ($\alpha > .95$ for both Portuguese and original versions).

Psychological Well-Being Manifestation Measure Scale (PWBMMMS) (Massé et al., 1998; Portuguese version adapted by Monteiro et al., 2012)

This scale assesses overall psychological well-being. It consists of twenty-five items, divided into six subscales: i) self-esteem (e.g., "I felt confident"); ii) balance (e.g., "I was like myself, natural in all circumstances."); iii) social involvement (e.g., "I had goals and ambitions"); iv) sociability (e.g., "I laughed with ease"); v) control (e.g., "In the face of complex situations, I was able to solve them clearly."); and vi) happiness (e.g., "I was quite calm" .). Participants answer using a Likert scale from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Almost always"). Total scores were computed by calculating the arithmetic mean of the individual items by subscale, with higher scores indicating greater psychological well-being. Both the original version (Massé et al., 1998) and the scale adapted for the Portuguese population reveal very good internal consistency values, both with $\alpha = .93$.

NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Portuguese version of Magalhães et al., 2014)

The NEO-FFI is a questionnaire used to identify personality traits. The NEO-FFI assesses the personality of each element. It is a reduced version of NEO-PI-R (Portuguese version of Lima & Simões, 1997; 2006) and reflects the basic dimensions of personality based on the 5-factor model: i) Extroversion (e.g., "I am a very active person."); ii) Agreeableness (e.g., "I try to be gentle with everyone I meet."); iii) Openness to experience (e.g., "I often try new and unknown foods."); iv) Neuroticism (e.g., "I'm not a concerned person"); and v) Conscientiousness (e.g., "I keep my things clean and in order."). It includes 60 items, 12 for dimensions, answered on a 5-point Likert scale, from 0 ("Strongly disagree") to 4 ("Strongly agree"). Validity and reliability of the NEO-FFI has been demonstrated (Cronbach alpha range from .71 to .82) (Magalhães et al., 2014; McCrae & Costa, 2004).

Procedure

Participants did not receive monetary compensation, and were recruited through personal and institutional emails, and social networks (Instagram and Facebook). Participants' responses were recorded anonymously using the Qualtrics Research Suite program. For all

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participants, the sociodemographic questionnaire was presented first, followed by the ATACH, PWBMMS, and NEO-FFI, in a counterbalanced order. Participants took an average of 15 minutes to complete the survey.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were first exported to an Excel spreadsheet and then analyses were conducted with the statistical software Statistical Package for Social Sciences[®] (IBM SPSS[®]; version 27). These analyses included: i) correlations to evaluate the associations among variables, namely age, religiousness, neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, happiness, sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem, balance, acceptance and rejection; ii) *t* tests to examine gender differences, differences between participants with and without children, religious and non-religious, with and without LGBTQIA+ friends and with and without LGBTQIA+ family members; iii) unidirectional analyses of variance (ANOVA) to investigate possible differences between participants with different sexual orientations, marital status, political parties (left, right, center and non-partisans), places of residence and religions; and iv) multiple regression models predicting acceptance and rejection. A criterion of $p < .05$ was used for significance tests.

Results

Descriptive analyses

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the sample on the different scales. Results are shown for both the full sample and separately for males and females. Results indicated that, compared with women, male participants tend to be less religious, $t(325.933) = -2.697$, and to score less in neuroticism, $t(858) = -5.556$, less agreeableness, $t(858) = -3.793$, less conscientiousness, $t(223.803) = -3.826$, less sociability, $t(253.068) = -2.360$, less acceptance, $t(209.794) = 6.268$. However, men tend to be happier, and to score more in control, and rejection than women, $t(922) = 4.642$, $t(257.845) = 2.064$, and $t(210.813) = 5.434$, respectively.

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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Gender

	Female		Male		<i>p</i>
	Mean	DP	Mean	DP	
Age	32.30	12.12	34.11	13.71	.65
Religiousness	2.60	1.81	2.23	1.71	.001
Neuroticism	3.16	.67	2.84	.60	.000
Extroversion	3.41	.58	3.48	.59	.162
Openness to experience	3.49	.52	3.53	.49	.372
Agreeableness	3.74	.44	3.59	.48	.000
Conscientiousness	3.90	.60	3.68	.71	.000
Happiness	10.32	.84	10.64	.82	.000
Sociability	8.19	2.10	7.67	3.00	.019
Control	10.45	.79	10.59	.81	.040
Social Involvement	10.50	.87	10.62	.80	.080
Self-esteem	10.60	.74	10.68	.76	.182
Balance	10.79	.76	10.76	.83	.605
Acceptance	6.00	.74	5.47	1.03	.000
Rejection	1.94	.71	2.37	.98	.000

Correlational analyses

We examined correlations between age, religiosity, personality (neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness), well-being (happiness, sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem, and balance), and attitudes towards same-sex adoption (acceptance and rejection). Results are shown in Table 3. Age was positively correlated with religiosity ($r = .07, p = .02$), extroversion ($r = .12, p = .001$), openness to experience ($r = .11, p = .001$), agreeableness ($r = .13; p = .000$), conscientiousness ($r = .16, p = .000$), happiness ($r = .11, p = .001$), control ($r = .16, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .009, p = .008$), self-esteem ($r = .23, p = .000$), balance ($r = .15, p = .000$) and rejection ($r = .22, p = .000$), indicating that older people tended to be more religious, and score more in extroversion,

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openness to experience, agreeableness, consciousness, happiness, control, social involvement, self-esteem, balance and rejection. On the other hand, age was negatively correlated with neuroticism ($r = -.28, p = .000$) and acceptance ($r = -.26, p = .000$), showing that older people tended to score less on neuroticism and acceptance.

Religiosity was positively correlated with extroversion ($r = .10, p = .003$), agreeableness ($r = .11, p = .002$), consciousness ($r = .12, p = .000$), happiness ($r = .09, p = .01$), control ($r = .09, p = .007$), social involvement ($r = .11, p = .001$), self-esteem ($r = .11, p = .001$), balance ($r = .07, p = .03$) and rejection ($r = .12, p = .000$) and negatively correlated with the opening to experience ($r = -.007, p = .04$) and acceptance ($r = -.09, p = .008$). That shows that more religious people tended to score higher in extroversion, agreeableness, consciousness, happiness, control, social involvement, self-esteem, balance, rejection and scoreless in acceptance and openness to experience.

Neuroticism was positively correlated with acceptance ($r = .15, p = .000$) and was negatively correlated with extroversion ($r = -.46, p = .000$), openness to experience ($r = -.14, p = .000$), agreeableness ($r = -.29, p = .000$), consciousness ($r = -.34, p = .000$), happiness ($r = -.63, p = .000$), sociability ($r = -.15, p = .000$), control ($r = -.58, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = -.40, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = -.58, p = .000$) and balance ($r = -.41, p = .000$). That shows that, people that score more in neuroticism tended to score more in acceptance, and score less in extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, consciousness, happiness, sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Extroversion was positively correlated with openness to experience ($r = .20, p = .000$), agreeableness ($r = .29, p = .000$), consciousness ($r = .36, p = .000$), happiness ($r = .53, p = .000$), sociability ($r = .20, p = .000$), control ($r = .47, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .46, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .50, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .27, p = .000$). Results shows that, people that score more in extroversion, tended to score higher in openness to experience, agreeableness, consciousness, happiness, sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Open to experience was positively correlated with agreeableness ($r = .13, p = .000$), consciousness ($r = .09, p = .01$), happiness ($r = .11, p = .001$), control ($r = .17, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .31, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .13, p = .000$), and acceptance ($r = .15, p = .000$). On the other hand, it was negatively correlated with rejection ($r = -.22, p = .000$). That Shows that, people that score higher in openness to experience tended to score higher in

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agreeableness, conscientiousness, happiness, control, social involvement, self-esteem and acceptance.

Agreeableness was positively correlated with conscientiousness ($r = .27, p = .000$), happiness ($r = .29, p = .000$), sociability ($r = .14, p = .000$), control ($r = .23, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .21, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .27, p = .000$), balance ($r = .24, p = .000$) and acceptance ($r = .13, p = .000$). Also, it was possible to observe that was negatively correlated with rejection ($r = -.15, p = .000$). That indicates that, people that score more in agreeableness tended to score higher in conscientiousness, happiness, control, social involvement, self-esteem, balance, sociability, and acceptance.

Conscientiousness was positively correlated with happiness ($r = .38, p = .000$), control ($r = .39, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .43, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .42, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .36, p = .000$). Showing that people that score more in conscientiousness tend to score higher in happiness, control, social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Happiness was positively correlated with sociability ($r = .68, p = .000$), control ($r = .74, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .59, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .76, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .63, p = .000$). That shows that, people that score more in happiness tended to score more in sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Sociability was positively correlated with control ($r = .62, p = .000$), social involvement ($r = .52, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .61, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .53, p = .000$). That shows that, people that score more in sociability tend to score higher in control, social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Control was positively correlated with social involvement ($r = .55, p = .000$), self-esteem ($r = .68, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .54, p = .000$). That shows that, people that score higher in control, score higher in social involvement, self-esteem and balance.

Social involvement was positively correlated with self-esteem ($r = .60, p = .000$) and balance ($r = .38, p = .000$). Social involvement was negatively correlated with rejection ($r = -.09, p = .01$). Showing that, people that score higher in social involvement, score higher in self-esteem and balance.

Self-esteem was positively correlated with balance ($r = .53, p = .000$). That shows that, people with higher self-esteem score higher in balance.

Acceptance was negatively correlated with rejection ($r = -.79, p = .000$). That shows that people that score higher in acceptance, score less in rejection.

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Table 3

Correlational analyses between age, religiousness, neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, happiness, sociability, control, social involvement, self-esteem, balance, acceptance, and rejection

<i>Variables</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Age	–	.074*	-.281***	.115***	.111***	.132***	.155***	.114***	-.016	.164***	.087**	.227***	.145***	-.258***	.215***
2. Religiousness		–	-.005	.102**	-.069*	.107**	.124***	.085**	-.018	.089**	.106***	.106***	.072*	-.089**	.121***
3. Neuroticism			–	-.464***	-.141***	-.285***	-.335***	-.629***	-.148***	-.580***	-.397***	-.580***	-.405***	.146***	-.051
4. Extroversion				–	.201***	.291***	.360***	.531***	.200***	.471***	.455***	.502***	.266***	-.037	.016
5. Openness to experience					–	.127***	.088**	.114***	-.010	.173***	.307***	.126***	.008	.152***	-.219***
6. Agreeableness						–	.267***	.288***	.141***	.232***	.207***	.269***	.242***	.130***	-.154***
7. Conscientiousness							–	.381***	.054	.390***	.434***	.421***	.356***	.024	-.060
8. Happiness								–	.684***	.743***	.591***	.759***	.628***	-.065	.010
9. Sociability									–	.618***	.522***	.612***	.528***	.024	-.026
10. Control										–	.554***	.681***	.539***	-.007	-.061
11. Social involvement											–	.601***	.383***	.011	-.088*
12. Self-esteem												–	.532***	-.010	-.045
13. Balance													–	-.003	-.007
14. Acceptance														–	-.792***
15. Rejection															–

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

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Regression analyses predicting Acceptance and Rejection

The zero-order correlations presented above demonstrate that age, religiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness were associated with Acceptance and age, religiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness and social involvement were associated with Rejection. However, because some of these variables were low-to-moderately intercorrelated, it was of interest to determine the collective and unique explanatory power of these variables. Therefore, we performed multiple regression analyses wherein the subscales of the Attitudes Towards Adoption of Children by Homosexuals (i.e., Acceptance and Rejection) were each simultaneously regressed onto these six predictor variables. On Table 4 it is possible to see that the model measured the variables collectively explained approximately 15% of the total variance in Acceptance (14.6%) and Rejection (14.7%). The standardized regression coefficients (β s) for the specific variables indicated that age, religiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness were the strongest and unique predictors of acceptance and rejection of adoption by same-sex couples. These patterns support the deduction that age, religiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness were the strongest and unique predictors of Attitudes Towards Adoption of Children by Homosexuals.

Table 4

Multiple regression models predicting Acceptance and Rejection

Variable	Acceptance		Rejection	
	β	P	β	P
Model				
Age	-.017	.000***	.015	.000***
Religiousness	-.042	.007**	.049	.001***
Neuroticism	.191	.000***	-.093	.042*
Openness to Experience	.260	.000***	-.316	.000***
Agreeableness	.359	.000***	-.322	.000***
Social involvement	.015	.691	-.040	.251
Model r^2	.146		.147	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Attitudes towards same-sex adoption and sociodemographic variables

As shown in Figure 1, *T* tests for independent means that individuals with children tended to score less in acceptance ($M_{acceptance} = 5.65$, $SD = .93$) and more in rejection ($M_{rejection}$

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= 2.23, $SD = .91$), than participants without children ($M_{acceptance} = 6.06$, $SD = .72$; $M_{rejection} = 1.89$, $SD = .66$), $t(568.781) = -6.867$, $p < .001$ e $t(539.221) = 5.778$, $p < .001$, respectively. Participants who consider themselves religious scored less in acceptance ($M_{Acceptance} = 5.79$, $SD = .89$) and more in rejection ($M_{Rejection} = 2.15$, $SD = .83$) than participants who do not consider themselves religious ($M_{acceptance} = 6.02$, $SD = .74$, $M_{rejection} = 1.87$, $SD = .69$), $t(866.870) = 4.12$, $p < .001$ and $t(865.897) = 5.40$, $p < .001$, respectively. Participants with LGBTIQ+ families scored more in acceptance ($M_{acceptance} = 6.02$, $SD = .76$) and less in rejection ($M_{rejection} = 1.90$, $SD = .71$) than participants without LGBTQIA+ families ($M_{acceptance} = 5.86$, $SD = .85$, $M_{rejection} = 2.06$, $SD = .80$), $t(403.981) = 2.59$, $p < .05$ and $t(408.497) = -2.83$, $p < .01$, respectively. Participants with LGBTIQ+ friends, scored more in acceptance ($M_{acceptance} = 6.02$, $SD = .74$) and less in rejection ($M_{rejection} = 1.90$, $SD = .70$) than participants without LGBTQIA+ friends ($M_{acceptance} = 5.64$, $SD = .96$, $M_{rejection} = 2.28$, $SD = .88$), $t(427.120) = 5.78$, $p < .001$ and $t(439.561) = -6.33$, $p < .001$, respectively.

Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were performed to examine possible differences in acceptance and rejection depending on the political parties of the participants. Results showed a significant effect of acceptance, $F(3,804) = 21,008$, $p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that right parties people scored less on acceptance ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 1.104$) than those on the left ($M = 5.89$, $SD = .794$), $p < .001$, than center ones ($M = 6.19$, $SD = .602$), $p < .001$ and than the nonpartisans ($M = 5.85$, $SD = .852$), $p < .001$. In addition, people with a tendency to center parties ($M = 6.19$, $SD = .602$), scored more on acceptance than people on the left parties ($M = 5.89$, $SD = .794$), $p < .001$, and than nonpartisans ($M = 5.85$, $SD = .852$), $p < .001$. Results also showed a significant effect of rejection, $F(3,804) = 20.028$, $p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that people from right parties ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.044$) scored higher than the left ones ($M = 2.04$, $SD = .741$), $p < .001$, than center ones ($M = 1.76$, $SD = .575$), $p < .001$, and than the nonpartisans ($M = 2.02$, $SD = .816$), $p < .001$. Individuals with a tendency to center parties ($M = 1.76$, $SD = .575$) scored less than those on the left ($M = 2.04$, $SD = .741$), $p < .001$, and than nonpartisans ($M = 2.02$, $SD = .816$), $p < .01$.

Concerning sexual orientations and acceptance proved to have a significant effect $F(4,866) = 5,931$, $p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that heterosexual people ($M = 5.85$, $SD = .850$) score less than bisexual ($M = 6.29$, $SD = .491$), $p < .001$ and then homosexuals ($M = 6.24$, $SD = .548$), $p < .05$. Results also showed a significant effect of with rejection $F(4,866) = 5,945$, $p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that

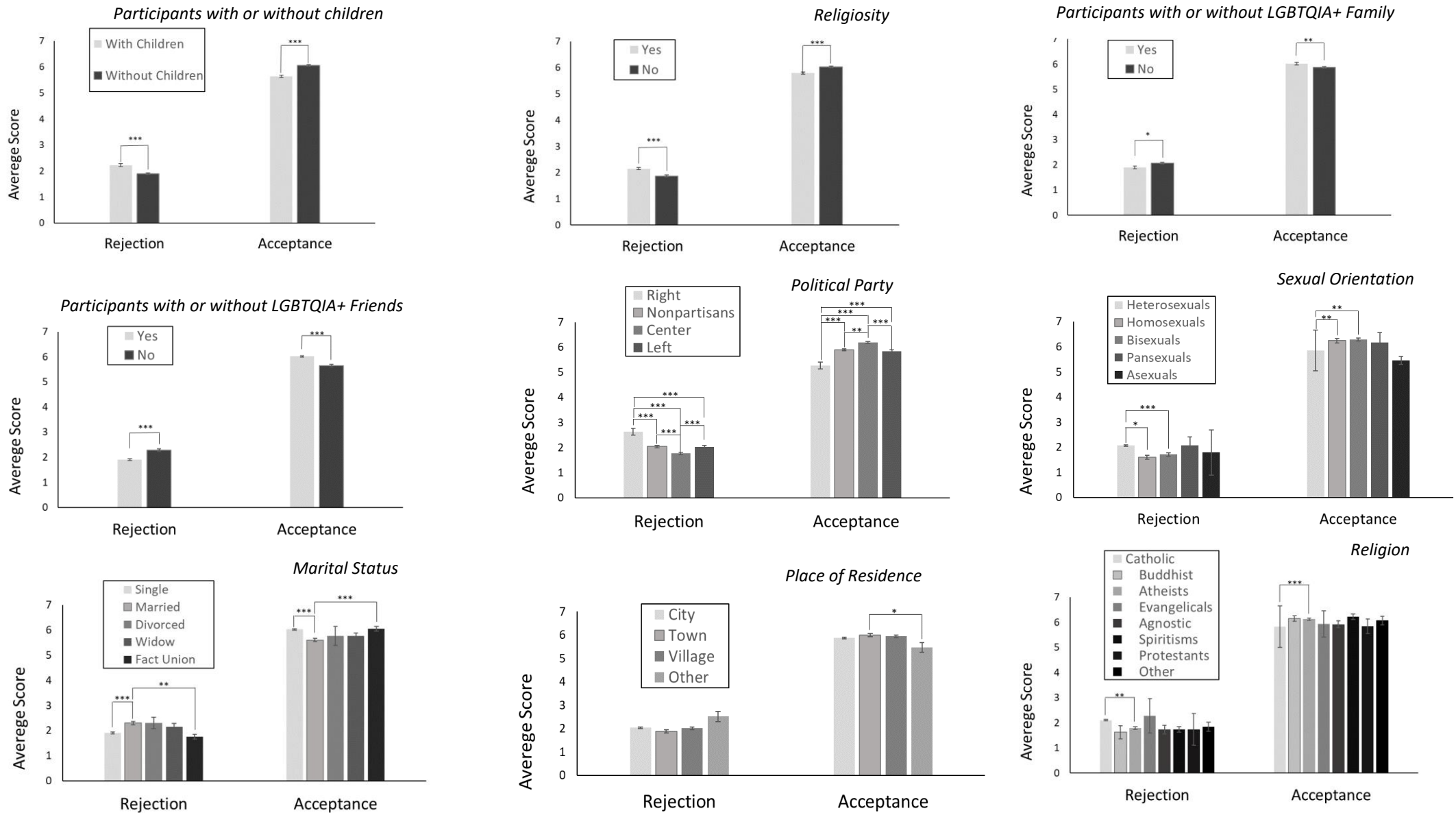
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heterosexual people ($M = 2.07, SD = .803$) score more than bisexual ($M = 1.71, SD = .481$), $p < .01$ and then homosexuals ($M = 1.60, SD = .511$), $p < .01$. As far as marital status and acceptance is concerned, there was also a significant effect $F(4,866) = 12.041, p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that in which married people ($M = 5.60, SD = .960$) tend to score less than single ($M = 6.03, SD = .742$), $p < .001$ and then those in a facto union ($M = 6.05, SD = .662$), $p < .01$. Finally, as far as rejection was also a significant effect on the $F(4,866) = 12.522, p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that married people ($M = 2.30, SD = .916$) tend to score more than single ($M = 1.91, SD = .684$), $p < .001$ and then those in a facto union ($M = 1.75, SD = .643$), $p < .001$.

Place of residence and rejection also indicated a significant effect $F(3,867) = 2.929, p < .05$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that people residing in village ($M = 1.89, SD = .723$) tend to score less than residents elsewhere ($M = 2.52, SD = .731, p < .05$). Religion and acceptance also indicated a significant effect $F(7,859) = 3.108, p < .01$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that Catholics ($M = 5.82, SD = .858$) accept less than atheists ($M = 6.13, SD = .696$), $p < .01$. Religion and rejection also indicated a significant effect $F(7,859) = 4.264, p < .001$. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests demonstrated that Catholics ($M = 2.11, SD = .824$) reject more than atheists ($M = 1.80, SD = .295$), $p < .001$. It is important to note that further unidirectional analyses were conducted in order to investigate if there were any differences between participants literacy level and with different socioeconomic levels but showed no significant effects Acceptance and Rejection subscales ($p_s > .05$).

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Figure 1. Attitudes towards same-sex adoption and sociodemographic variables



*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; Note. Average scores of rejection and acceptance. Bars indicate +1 SE.

Discussion

The issue of adopting children by same-sex couples is quite sensitive (Sani & Quaranta, 2020). Even though changes have been occurring in the legislation of many countries in order to allow the adoption by same-sex couples, this process is still dominated by discrimination (Melo et al., 2020; Takács et al., 2016). It is then essential to study possible variables associated with attitudes toward same-sex adoption and their predictive values. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward same-sex couples, and personality, well-being, and sociodemographic variables (e.g., age and religiousness).

Results showed that individuals with higher levels of agreeableness and openness to experience tend to have less negative attitudes towards same-sex couples adoption. These findings are partially consistent with our first hypothesis. In addition, these results are congruent with the literature on prejudice, that has shown that the higher the prejudice, the lower the agreeableness (Bergh et al., 2016; Ekhammar et al., 2004; Roy et al., 2021) and the lower the openness to experience (Blais-Rochette et al., 2021; Flynn, 2005; Roy et al., 2021). For example, Blais-Rochette and colleagues (2021) revealed that low agreeableness and low openness to experience are predictors of cultural prejudice, social dominant and right-wing authoritarianism. Moreover, research has been showing that individuals more open to experience tend to be more sensitive and empathic (Boyetto et al., 2013), and those more agreeable tend to be more supportive and empathic (Lin & Alvarez, 2020). However, our data did not show any significant differences between individuals with different levels of extroversion and conscientiousness with regard to attitudes towards same-sex adoption – which is inconsistent with our first hypothesis. This may be due to the fact that the relations between extroversion and prejudice, as well, conscientiousness and prejudice, are still unclear or even negligible (Crawford & Brandt, 2019; Sibley & Duckitt, 2018).

Results also showed that individuals with higher levels of neuroticism have a tendency to have less negative attitudes towards same-sex couples' adoption, which is inconsistent with our second hypothesis. According to Crawford and Brandt (2019), neuroticism establishes a relationship with prejudice, in which individuals that score low in neuroticism have more prejudice against more liberal people and ideologies, and individuals that score higher in neuroticism have more prejudice against more conservative people and ideologies. Also, Schmitt and colleagues (2005) refer that people that score higher in neuroticism tended to be

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more sensitive and against injustices. On the other hand, Ziller & Berning (2021) states the concept “social desirability” in with people that score higher in neuroticism have a tendency to try to fit and pleasant others, by choosing ideologies by what they think it is what others would choose to.

Our third hypothesis stated that individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being would have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption. Our results showed that individuals with more social involvement tend to have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption, which is consistent with our hypothesis. According to the literature, social involvement requires integration and motivation to be on a social group (Monteiro et al., 2012). Al Ramiah and Hewstone (2013) stated that intergroup contact reduces prejudice, which promotes positive contact with people with different ideas and exposition toward different values and ideologies (Guerra, 2012). However, our data did not show any significant differences between individuals that scored differently in the remaining five subscales of the psychological well-Being instrument – self-esteem, balance, sociability, control and happiness – with regard to the attitudes towards same-sex adoption. This may be due to the fact that although psychological well-being can trigger emotions, responses, attitudes, behaviors and perceptions about future, according to our personal beliefs (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2017), and there is no conclusion about the relation between attitudes and self-esteem (Ostrowsky, 2010); balance, normally associated with positive attitudes, is impacted by emotional states, making it inconsistent (Carlson et al., 2013; Valcour, 2007; Wayne et al., 2015); socialization refers to socializing with a social group, which diversifies the type of attitudes towards ingroup and outgroups (Monteiro et al., 2012; Al Ramiah & Hewston, 2013; Guerra, 2012), in turn, control is dependent on the degree of impulsiveness and self-control in decision making as well as the feeling of control in the face of a situation (Hare et al., 2009; Wolpert & Landy, 2012), which regarding the situation of adoption will vary according to personal beliefs; and happiness trigger emotions and attitudes according to there perspective of future and personal beliefs (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2017).

In addition, results showed that older individuals tend to score higher in rejection and lower in acceptance of same-sex adoption. According to the literature, older people tend to have more traditional positions regarding gender issues, being less tolerant toward sexual

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minorities (Aboim et al., 2011; Herek & Gonzalez-Rivera, 2006), including same-sex adoption (Takács et al., 2016).

In fact, our results showed that age, religiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness were the strongest predictors of attitudes toward same-sex adoption. These results strengthen that older individuals, more religiousness, with lower levels of neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness have a tendency to show more negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption.

It was also possible to verify that women showed less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption compared to men. According to the literature, women tend to be more tolerant and empathetic (Christov-Moore et al., 2014; Tella et al., 2020), revealing less negative attitudes towards homosexuality and adoption by same-sex couples than men (Costa et al., 2013; D'Amore et al., 2014; Gomes et al., 2019; Gusmão et al., 2016; Pistella et al., 2016).

Furthermore, individuals without children had a tendency to have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption than individuals with children. This result is in line with the study of Takács (2016) that showed that people without children showed a more positive attitude towards adoption by same-sex couples. One possible explanation for this result may be the empathy felt by individuals who do not have children towards same-sex couples who wish to adopt. In addition, in our sample, individuals with children were older ($M_{withchildren} = 43.14$; $SD = 10.37$) than individuals without children ($M_{withoutchildren} = 26.03$; $SD = 8.49$), and younger generations are shown to be more tolerant (Aboim et al., 2011; Kite & Whitley, 1996).

More religious people showed more negative attitudes towards adoption by same-sex couples. According to the literature, more religious individuals tend to support more conservative ideologies and the maintenance of traditional behaviours (Costa et al., 2015; Gomes, 2019; Cerqueira-Santos et al., 2017) as well as have more negative attitudes toward same-sex adoption (D'Amore et al., 2014).

Our data showed that family members of the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as those with friends in the LGBTQIA+ community, tended to have less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption. According to the literature, family and friendships with the LGBTQIA+ community promote more positive and defensive attitudes for the LGBTQIA+ community (Melo et al., 2020), provide greater tolerance towards LGBTQIA+ individuals (Bartos et al.,

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2014), as an increase knowledge of the cause and the dynamics of this community (Gomes et al., 2019).

Regarding political preferences, supporters of right-wing parties showed more negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption than center parties, left-wing parties and unpartisan. According to D'Amore and colleagues (2014), individuals who support conservative political ideologies tend to have more negative attitudes towards adoption by couples of the same-sex, as they are more intertwined with conservative and traditional gender role policies (Melo et al., 2020).

As for sexual orientation, heterosexuals participants showed more negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption than bisexuals and homosexuals. According to the literature, sexual stigma preserves social values due in heteronormativity superior status and social power (Cerqueira-Santos, 2017; Hegarty & Pratto, 2001; Pistella, 2018), where the family requires a mother and a father (Webb et al., 2019) and all the violation of gender expectations are not well seen by heterosexuals, especially by heterosexual men (Capezza, 2007; Lingiardi et al. 2016; Pistella, 2018).

Additionally, people in a factio union showed less negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption than married individuals and singles. Cerqueira-Santos and colleagues (2017), also similar results: individuals on a de facto union and those who were single reported less negative attitudes toward same-sex adoption, than married individuals.

Regarding place of residence, results showed that people residing in villages showed more negative attitudes towards same-sex adoption than residence elsewhere. According to Sharif (2019), the alienation and individualism felt in cities lives makes people less exposed to frequent act of discrimination and prejudice, promoting job opportunities and life quality and life reservation. In this sense, people who live in cities have a greater contact with the LGBTQIA + community, which allows normalization in living (Delgado et al., 2014).

Regarding religion, results showed that atheists score more in acceptance and less in rejection than Catholics. This result is congruent with prior studies that found atheists to be more acceptance of adoption by same-sex couples and to have higher levels of interpersonal contact with the LGBT population when compared to Catholics (Santos et al., 2017). The literature has shown that some religions the sacred scriptures condemning same-sex relationships (Sani & Quaranta, 2020), thereby providing moral ideologies that people should guide (Halman & Van Ingen, 2015).

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It is important to mention some limitations of our study. First, because we used self-report measures, participants' responses may have been influenced by social desirability or fear (specially the victims of IPV), they may have difficulty understanding the instructions and questions, and may have experience deficits in their introspective capacity (Wetzel, 2016). Despite being a heterogeneous sample, it consisted of a convenience sample, since the participants were recruited through social networks (Facebook e Instagram), personal and institutional emails which can become a limitation. The scale used to assess attitudes towards the adoption of children by couples of the same-sex also proved to be limiting to the study, since it did not include inclusive language and combined multiple sentences into one item.

In conclusion neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness, age, and religiousness were the strongest predictors of attitudes toward same-sex adoption. In addition, men, older people, with children, more religious, without LGBTQIA+ family and friends, right wing parties, heterosexual, married, Catholics, and those that live in villages tend to have more negative attitudes toward same-sex adoption. This study is relevant at a theoretical level since the literature on the same-sex adoption is scarce and this issue is urgent to decrease prejudice and help same-sex couples to fulfil their will to be parents and children their wish to have a loving family. These are novel results with important practical implications. More specifically, they may help: i) perceiving if the professionals involved in the adoption process are capable and impartial; iii) signaling of important people in the educational processes of children with personalities that are conducive to acts of discrimination; iii) raising awareness in school and family contexts to the importance of inclusive communication and information about LGBTQIA+ community; and iv) to fight for more inclusive policies and parties wing; and demystify the concept and lifestyle of same-sex couples, in order to combat sexual stigma and the ideology of failure in parenting tasks by theme.

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ANEXOS



Universidade do Minho

Conselho de Ética

Comissão de Ética para a Investigação em Ciências Sociais e Humanas

Identificação do documento: CEICSH 43/2020

Relatores: Emanuel Pedro Viana Barbas Albuquerque e Marlene Alexandra Veloso Matos

Título do projeto: *Comportamentos prosociais numa situação de incerteza social*

Equipa de Investigação: Daniela Costa, Doutoramento em Psicologia Básica, Escola de Psicologia, Universidade do Minho; Professor Doutor José Keating e Professora Doutora Joana Arantes (Orientadores), Escola de Psicologia, Universidade do Minho

PARECER

A Comissão de Ética para a Investigação em Ciências Sociais e Humanas (CEICSH) analisou o processo relativo ao projeto de investigação acima identificado, intitulado *Comportamentos prosociais numa situação de incerteza social*. Os documentos apresentados revelam que o projeto obedece aos requisitos exigidos para as boas práticas na investigação com humanos, em conformidade com as normas nacionais e internacionais que regulam a investigação em Ciências Sociais e Humanas.

Face ao exposto, a Comissão de Ética para a Investigação em Ciências Sociais e Humanas (CEICSH) nada tem a opor à realização do projeto, emitindo o seu parecer favorável, que foi aprovado por unanimidade pelos seus membros.

Braga, 26 de maio de 2020.

O Presidente da CEICSH

(Acílio Estanqueiro Rocha)

Anexo: Formulário de identificação e caracterização do projeto