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**Integration of culture, religion and sexuality:
A study of Caucasian and Asian gay men**

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ABSTRACT

The theory of cognitive dissonance postulates that holding conflicting beliefs about culture, religion and sexuality leads to an internal conflict. Religious homosexual men who are unable to integrate these opposing cognitions often experience internalized homonegativity, a form of cognitive dissonance. Previous research on gay religious men has mainly focused on Caucasian populations; therefore, current understanding of cognitive dissonance is somewhat limited. Moreover, no research to-date has managed to study combined impact of culture, religion and internalized shame on gay men's internalized homonegativity. This research was aimed at investigating how cultural mores, religious beliefs and internalized shame predicted homonegativity. Also, the study endeavoured to understand how this marginalised group reconciled their religion, culture and sexuality. An online survey, which comprised of a self-report questionnaire assessing religious orientation, internalized shame and internalized homonegativity, was completed by 133 Caucasian and Asian gay men. The respondents also were asked to write a short answer in which they had to explain how they integrated their religion and sexual practices. The quantitative analyses of data demonstrated no significant difference in internalized homonegativity among the two cultural groups. Internalized homonegativity was predicted by the main Abrahamic faiths (i.e. Christianity, Islam and Judaism) and internalized shame. Qualitative analysis showed that gay men who adhere to a monotheistic religious faith follow a different path to reconciling their religion and homosexuality compared to gay men who adhere to Philosophical/New Age religions or to gay men who have no religious faith. The implications of these findings as well as directions for future research studies were discussed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Studies examining cognitive dissonance in relation to homosexuality and religion primarily use Caucasian/White samples. However, gay men come from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, more studies are needed that will focus on non-white gay men. Across cultures, homosexual men try to incorporate socially marginalised identities in their self-concept. When reconciliation does not occur between one's religious beliefs, cultural values and homosexual identity then the cognitive dissonance leads to internalized homonegativity, which in turn has debilitating effects on one's mental health. Internalized homonegativity has been found to be associated with internalized shame (Allen & Oleson, 1999), low self-esteem (Yakushko 2005), disordered eating habits (Torres, 2008), depression (Bag, Gencdogan, Reis & Kilic, 2005; Rosser, Bockting, Ross, Miner & Coleman, 2008), anxiety, negative body image (Reilly & Rudd, 2006), isolation as well as greater relationship problems both generally and among couples (Frost & Meyer, 2009).

This study is aimed at advancing the current understanding of internalized conflict between religion and sexuality among culturally diverse gay men. The research project examines the individual roles of religious faith, religious orientation, internalized shame and culture in predicting internalized homonegativity, a form of cognitive dissonance. Also, the current study attempts to explain how followers of one the three main Abrahamic faiths and Philosophical/New Age faiths integrated their religion, culture and sexuality. The study also juxtaposes believers with atheists to analyse how individuals come to terms with their homosexuality. The present study employed the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance as a guide to investigate the following research questions:

1. how culture, religion and internalized shame predicted internalized homonegativity

2. how gay men of various religious denominations reconciled their religion, culture and sexuality

The following chapters provide a literature review, research hypotheses, methodologies, data analyses and discussion relevant to this study.

1.1 Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Festinger, 1957) describes a psychological discomfort caused by holding cognitions (such as beliefs, values or attitudes) that are diametrically opposed to one another. As the number of these inconsistent cognitions increases, so does the magnitude of cognitive dissonance. Holding certain beliefs about cultural mores, religion and sexual behaviour can establish consonance or dissonance among these cognitions. The magnitude of dissonance is positively related to how important specific values are to a person.

The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance has been used extensively in literature as a guiding theory to frame the study of gay men and their sexual identity integration (Alderson, 2003; Andersona, Elamb, Gerverc, Solarinc, Fentond & Easterbrook, 2009; Bhugra, 1997; Botnick, 2000; Haldeman, 2004; Ratti, Bakeman, & Peterson 2000). The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance provides a good framework for this research project as it effectively explains how several conflicting cognitions shape internal conflict and how the internal conflict can be mitigated. However, while employing this theory any data analysis from this study would need to be treated with some caution as this theoretical model was developed in the context of Caucasian heterosexual sample but later was applied to other ethnic and minority groups (Alderson, 2003).

Authors Peng and Nisbett (1999) indirectly challenged the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance by presenting a new approach to deal with contradictions within a cultural context. The authors argue that Asians take upon a compromise approach when presented with contradictions in that they are accepting of opposing sides. On the other hand, Westerners employ Aristotelian logic in deciding which contradictory position would be a correct one to take. In other words, generally people with Asian backgrounds are more likely to move towards tolerance and acceptance while Caucasians pursue more 'right from wrong' approach. This school of thought about contradictions can be applied to gay men of Caucasian and Asian descent who have to deal with cognitive dissonance while integrating their culture, religion and sexuality. Thus, Asian gay men seem to be more appreciative of cognitive dissonance compared to their Caucasian counterparts. This tendency towards tolerance has been labelled as dialectical thinking by the scholars. Peng and Nisbett (1999) state that Eastern ways of dealing with contradictions may give Asians advantage in complex social situations while Western ways would be more beneficial in scientific research. Thus, the dialectical thinking implies that Asian gay men are able to effectively minimise their cognitive dissonance through tolerance of their cultural mores, religious beliefs and sexuality. This presents a challenge to the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, which considers culture to have an additive effect on cognitive dissonance.

As previously stated, the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance has been used as a guiding theory in research related to gay men. Also, the literature review on sexuality supports the effectiveness of this model when interpreting research findings. Therefore, it is feasible to use this model as a primary framework for this research project while taking into account Peng and Nisbett's approach on reasoning.

Religious homosexual men experience cognitive dissonance because of the inherently irreconcilable conflict between religion and homosexuality. According to the theory of cognitive dissonance the internal conflict can be mitigated by discarding specific beliefs, attitudes and behaviours or by validating them (Festinger, 1957; Mahaffy, 1996). In this vein, religious gay men can reject their dogmatic religious beliefs, change homosexual behaviour to heterosexual through conversion therapies (Worthington, 2004) or accept these conflicting identities. The more specific strategies involve: finding gay-affirmative interpretations of religious books; leaving a religious institution but still keeping their religious faith; seeking out gay-friendly religions (e.g. Wiccan, Paganism, New Age) (Szymanski, Kashubeck-West and Meyer, 2008); or distinguishing between spirituality and religion (Walton, 2006; Mahaffy 1996). The success of the outcome will depend on the extent to which the dissonant cognition (about religion, culture or homosexuality) is rooted in an individual gay man's psyche (Wicklund & Brehm, 1976).

Initial neglect of religion or homosexuality is eventually followed by their reconciliation through self-acceptance (Walton, 2006). However, if the reconciliation doesn't occur then the cognitive dissonance can lead to homonegative feelings (otherwise referred to as internalized homonegativity), which are related to internalized shame and guilt (Sherry, 2007) as well as general and mental health issues (Rosser, Bockting, Ross, Miner & Coleman (2008). Moreover, lack of self-acceptance was found to be associated with sexual dysfunction, including experiencing pain and anxiety during sexual intercourse among Chinese gay men in Hong Kong (Lau, Kim and Tsui, 2008). These findings should not be surprising considering that gay men have a higher prevalence of mental disorders (Meyer, 2003) and they are more likely than heterosexual individuals to seek counselling services (Phillips, Ingram, Smith & Mindes, 2003).

In summary, religious gay men need to address cognitive dissonance as it has been found to be associated with detrimental health issues. The gay men's internal conflict can be amplified when cultural or ethnic factors play an important role in shaping their gay identity. Rosario, Schrimshaw and Hunter (2004) strongly argued that cultural aspects may delay identity integration in gay men.

1.2. Culture and Homosexuality

Societal attitudes in Australia toward homosexuality range from condemnation to acceptability depending on one's ethnic background and religion. This is despite the fact that homosexuality was eliminated as a pathological disease from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in Australia almost three decades ago (Offord & Cantrell, 2001).

Homosexual acts are illegal in most African, Middle-Eastern and some Asian countries (e.g. Singapore, Malaysia) ("Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights by country or territory," 2009). In countries where homosexuality is forbidden, where males and females have defined socio-cultural duties or where males' primary obligation is to marry and procreate (Wang, Bih & Brennan, 2009; Khan, 2001), cognitive dissonance will be amplified for homosexual men compared to those living in the West. Unlike these countries, Australia allows cohabitation of gay couples and also, permits gays to serve openly in the military ("LGBT rights by country or territory," 2009). This is in no way an indication that gay men do not experience any prejudice in Australia. For example, a study on gay parents' experiences of health care in Australia showed that almost half of Australian parents were fearful of disclosing their sexual orientation to a medical professional (Mikhailovich, Martin & Lawton, 2001).

Western understanding of gay identity construction may not be applicable to Asian men due to the distinction between self-identification as gay (in the West) compared to men who have sex with other men but do not consider themselves to be homosexuals (in the East). According to Kimmel & Yi (2004) significantly larger number of Asian men experience same-sex relationships compared to those that identify themselves as gay. The word “gay” in Asian context refers to male to male sexual behaviours exclusively. In other words, Asian men who are usually married and have children are not considered gay when they engage in extramarital homosexual sex. Some have sex with men simply because it is cheaper to sleep with men than women (Khan, 2001). “Look, inside the park I am a gay. Once I leave the park and go onto the streets that changes. Outside the park, I am a good Hindu, a married man with a good family” (Khan, 2001, p. 106). In the English-speaking countries the gay-identity is seen as constant and continuous whereas in Southern Asian countries gay-heterosexual identities change according to context and need (Khan, 2001; Laurent, 2005). Another significant difference between Eastern and Western countries lies in the homo-social behaviour. In Asia, being emotionally close and physically intimate with another man is not considered the same as being sexually involved with him (Minwalla, Rosser, Feldman & Varga, 2005). Hence, these types of homo-social behaviours are acceptable and therefore, not perceived as shameful unlike in the Western countries. Nevertheless, Asian countries treat homosexuality as a taboo (Minwalla, et al. 2005).

In the past, Asian countries were considered to hold a liberal approach towards same-sex behaviour as long as men fulfilled their family obligations. The tolerant outlook was gradually replaced during the 19th and 20th centuries with the introduction of a Western notion that homosexuality was abnormal (Pan & Aggleton, 1996; Nakajima, Chan, & Lee, 1996 cited in Kimmel & Yi, 2004). For many Asians, integrating ethnic and homosexual identities can be very

difficult especially when concealing their homosexuality in order to maintain social standing and family dignity. Bhugra (1997) demonstrated that familial pressure and religion influenced the process of coming out among Asian gay men living in the United Kingdom. It is important to note that some Asian gay men living in the West may differ from those living in the Eastern countries in terms of their experience of cognitive dissonance. For example, Koreans, Japanese and Chinese gay men living in the United States were found to be more open about their sexual orientation compared to their peers living in Asia (Kimmel & Yi, 2004). However, the experience was found to be contrary for the South Asian gay men in Canada (Ratti, Bakeman & Peterson, 2000). These differences among Asians living in the Western countries were explained by Szymanski & Chung's (2006 cited in Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008) research on racial and sexual identities of Asian-American gay men. The scholars investigated participants' attitudes toward the dominant American culture as well as their attitudes toward their native ethnicity. The authors found that assimilationists (i.e. those possessing positive attitude toward Western culture but negative attitudes toward their Asian ethnicity) experienced greater cognitive dissonance followed by marginalists (i.e. those having negative attitudes toward Asian ethnic groups as well as toward Western culture) and separationists (i.e. those having positive attitudes toward their own minority group but negative attitudes toward the Western culture). Integrationists (i.e. those holding positive attitudes towards their own ethnic group as well as the dominant culture) were found to integrate their cultural differences and sexuality more effectively compared to the other groups in the study. This interesting study informs future researchers to be cautious when analysing data based on Asian sample in Western countries.

Thus, cognitive dissonance seems to be amplified for Asian gay men compared to their Caucasian peers due to the Asian cultural values. However, it is unknown whether one's culture or religious belief is a better predictor of cognitive dissonance and therefore internalized homonegativity. This research project will address this gap in literature.

1.3. Religious Denominations

Almost all religions provide guiding principles on moral upbringing and regulate identity development, sexual behaviour and family definition (Garcia, Gray-Stanley & Ramirez-Valles, 2008; Murray, Ciarrocchi & Murray-Swank, 2007). The Abrahamic religions such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism, view homosexuality as immoral (Barrett & Barzan, 1996; Davidson, 2000; Fukuyama & Ferguson, 2000; Gramick, 1983; Sherkat, 2002; cited in Garcia, Gray-Stanley & Ramirez-Valles, 2008). In contrast, more Philosophical religions such as Buddhism, paganism, Wiccan and New Age movements do not impose restrictions against same-sex relationships (de Visser, Smith, Richters & Rissel, 2007; Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that followers of the three main Abrahamic religions will experience higher cognitive dissonance compared to those that associate themselves with more Philosophical/New Age alternative religions and also those who do not have religious beliefs (e.g. atheists).

Some studies investigated how membership in affirming and non-affirming religious institutions related to cognitive dissonance and internalized homonegativity (IH). For example, Farnsworth (2002 cited in Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008) reported that IH was positively associated to following a non-affirming (traditional) religion while Lease, Horne and Noffsinger-Frazier (2005) found that affirming faith predicted lower levels of IH. Rowen and

Malcolm (2002) demonstrated that participants who belonged to a religious organisation had significantly higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to those that did not belong to a religious organisation.

Current study predicted that Christian, Muslim and Jewish gay men will experience higher homonegativity due to the dogmatic heterosexist teachings compared to followers of Philosophical/New Age religions (e.g. Buddhists, Spirituals, Agnostics) and those with no religion (e.g. Atheists, Antitheists). This project divided participants into three groups - Abrahamic, Philosophical/New Age and no religion in order to better understand how each group dealt with integrating their sexuality with their religious beliefs.

1.4 Religiosity

According to Nungesser (1983) the more religious a person is, the more anti-gay he/she is (cited in Wagner, Serafini, Rabkin, Remien & Williams, 1994). De Visser et al defined religiosity as a strong dedication to religion, which is expressed in one's daily activities and attitudes. A person's piety or religiosity (often called religious orientation) can be due to either intrinsic or extrinsic factors. Intrinsic religiosity is an indicator of the impact the religion has on all areas of one's life (Ahrold & Meston, 2008). In other words, reasons for being religious are mostly within the person. The extrinsically oriented person is less committed to religion as he uses it as a means for social gain, comfort, security and protection (Brewczynski & MacDonald, 2006). Most of the gay-related research indicated that intrinsically oriented people held homophobic attitudes towards same-sex orientations (Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005), whereas extrinsically oriented individuals did not discriminate against gays, lesbians and bisexuals

(Rowatt & Schmitt, 2003; Tozer & Hayes, 2004). Those who were less committed to religion (more specifically, attended church less than once a month) held similar views on homosexuality as their non-religious peers (De Visser et al).

Not ascribing to a particular religion is a growing phenomenon in today's society (Park, 2005). People without religious affiliations may view themselves as spiritual or agnostic (Zinnbauer et al., 1997; Averill, 1998 cited in Park, 2005). Tan (2005) found that spirituality, but not religion played an important role in positive adjustment to one's homosexual orientation. It is important to note that sometimes cultural factors have a stronger influence than traditional religious values on gay men's adjustment. For example, there are more resources and support available to construct self-identities for Christian gay men compared to homosexual Muslims (Yip, 2005).

Most of the studies on religiosity (Herek, 1987; Johnson, Brems, & Alford-Keating, 1997; Morrison, Parriag and Morrison, 1999; VanderStoep & Green, 1988) focus on heterosexual individual's importance of religion as a determinant of their homonegative or homophobic attitudes towards gay men. Such studies are likely not to distinguish intrinsic from extrinsic religiosity (Tozer & Hayes, 2004). The scant research on religious orientation (specifically intrinsic and extrinsic) offers mixed evidence for intrinsic/extrinsic religiosity in relation to gay men's experience of internalized homonegativity. For example, Tozer and Hayes (2004) showed that intrinsic religious orientation is positively but weakly related to increased IH ($r=.27$). However, Noffsinger-Frazier (2003) demonstrated that neither intrinsic nor extrinsic religious orientation was associated with internalized homonegativity. As more than half of the recruited gay men were from faith affirming religious groups the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity may not have been prominent in this research sample. Noffsinger-Frazier

(2003) suggested that an intrinsic religious orientation may not be related to internalized homonegativity for those gay men who are part of faith-affirming institutions.

The current study extended Tozer and Hayes's research by including extrinsic religiosity as a comparison to intrinsic religious orientation. The present research hypothesized that intrinsic religious orientation will harbour greater levels of homonegativity compared to extrinsically religious gay men.

1.5 Internalised Homonegativity

Literature on sexuality often refers to internalized homonegativity as internalized homophobia (IH). Therefore, these terms will be used interchangeably in this research study.

Internalized homonegativity is unique to non-heterosexual individuals who direct internalized negative attitudes toward homosexual orientation in themselves as well as toward homosexuality in general (Mayfield, 2001). A person with high internalized homonegativity will view homosexuality as abnormal and his same-sex attractions as immoral. There are more specific definitions or interpretations of internalized homonegativity. For example, the minority stress theory views internalized homonegativity as an external stressor brought about by prevailing anti-gay stereotypes and heterosexist society (Russell & Bohan, 2006 cited in Frost & Meyer, 2009). However, the supporters of the individual sexual identity development have demonstrated how internalized homonegativity is closely associated with the process of gay identity development (Cass, 1979, Meyer & Dean, 1998; Sophie, 1987 cited in Mayfield, 2001). Those in the later stages of gay identity development experience lower levels of internalized homonegativity. Another definition of the term includes the degree to which the gay men is out

about his sexual orientation and connected to the gay community (Mayfield, 2001; Shidlo, 1994; Williamson, 2000 cited in Frost & Meyer, 2009).

Internalized homophobia has a negative impact on gay men's mental and sexual health (Rosser, Bockting, Ross, Miner & Coleman, 2008). This is especially concerning given that the majority of gay males experience internalized homonegativity at some point in their life (Forstein, 1988; Gonsiorek, 1988 cited in Reilly & Rudd, 2006). Internalized homonegativity has been found to be associated with internalized shame (Allen & Oleson, 1999), low self-esteem (Yakushko, 2005), disordered eating (Bag, Gencdogan, Reis & Kilic, 2005; Torres, 2008), depression (Rosser, Bockting, Ross, Miner & Coleman, 2008), psychological distress (Szymanski & Gupta, 2009), negative body image (Reilly & Rudd, 2006; Torres, 2008), isolation as well as greater relationship problems both generally and among couples (Frost & Meyer, 2009). Gay men with high levels of internalized homonegativity demonstrated less psychosexual maturity and more isolation from peers (Rosser, Bockting, Ross, Miner & Coleman, 2008). Reilly and Rudd (2006) suggested that internalized homonegativity could also be related to social anxiety.

Scant research on internalized homonegativity in relation to cultural differences is still in its infancy. The limited research with ethnic groups suggests that cultural factors do have an impact on the experience of IH (Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008). Most of the reviewed research supports the notion that non-Caucasian gay men harbour greater levels of internalized homonegativity compared to their Caucasian counterparts (Rosario, Schrimshaw and Hunter, 2004; Ross, Rosser, Neumaier, and the Positive Connections Team, 2008; Ratti, Bakeman & Peterson, 2000). In contrast, Dube and Savin-Williams (1999) found no significant

difference in IH among Asian, Pacific Islander, African American, Latino and White young gay men.

Kimmel and Yi (2004) demonstrated the importance of considering ethnic variables when studying Asian gay men. For example, Ratti, Bakeman & Peterson (2000) conducted a study examining ethnic differences in internalized homonegativity among South Asian Canadian gay men and European Canadian counterparts. The scholars found that the Asian sample experienced significantly greater levels of homophobia compared to the European sample. The difference was suggested to be due to Asians experiencing cognitive dissonance i.e. internal conflict arising from pursuing a homosexual lifestyle while being from a conservative culture that rejects homosexuality.

The current research study builds on previous research concerning Asian gay men's experience of internalized homonegativity due to internal conflict of dual identities. It predicts that Asian gay men will harbour greater levels of homonegativity compared to Caucasian counterparts. Another important factor that shapes gay men's internal conflict is internalised shame which is often related to heterosexist environment as well as one's religion.

1.6 Internalised Shame

Shame is an emotional state that is difficult to assess directly as it does not involve easily definable facial expressions (Tangney, 1996). Lewis (2003) attributes the experience of shame to people's failure to meet a specific standard. Internalized shame is a pervasive form of shame, which one endures during a long period of time (del Rosario, & White, 2006). Nathanson (1992) identified the following eight cognitions that accompany the experience of shame: personal attributes, dependence/independence, competition, sense of self, personal attractiveness,

sexuality, issues of seeing and being seen, wishes and fears about closeness (as cited in del Rosario & White, 2006).

Gay men go through the experience of shame when comparing their same-sex attractions or behaviours to those set by the heterosexist society. This type of shame is defined as a state shame as it is more transient and situation-based affect. However, chronic results of frequent shame experience over a lifetime can result in what's called a trait shame (Cook 1996). This could imply that as gay men are growing up and developing their sexual identity, they are experiencing a state shame. If the shame experience persists then it becomes internalized in adulthood. This internalised shame (trait shame) is experienced in a more pervasive manner compared to state shame (del Rosario & White, 2006). According to Lewis (1971) the experience of shame has a debilitating impact on one's identity and self-concept (as cited in Tangney, 1996). However, the intensity of shame one experiences varies across cultures (Bedford, 2004; Tang, Wang, Qian, Gao & Zhang, 2008). In Asian countries, the experience of shame is closely associated moral beliefs (Bedford, 2004; Bedford & Hwang, 2003) and certain family traditions such as procreation. Therefore, if a gay man violates his duties by choosing to pursue homosexuality, he will be shamed by the rest of his family (Leeming & Boyle, 2004). Contradictory evidence exists in current literature in regards to the magnitude of shame experienced by collectivistic cultures in Asia compared to more individualistic cultures of the West. For example, a study conducted by Tang et al (2008) found that Americans experienced higher levels of shame compared to Chinese, contrary to the findings by previous research studies related to shame and cultural factors.

The limited research conducted on shame supports the notion that this variable is significantly associated with internalized homonegativity. Allen & Oleson (1999) found a

significant positive correlation between shame and internalized homophobia. In other words, gay men with high levels of shame experienced greater degrees of internalized homonegativity than gay men with low levels of shame. The scholars also provided some preliminary data on the characteristics of gay men by demonstrating significant correlation of internalised shame to numerous variables, including perverted, effeminate, weak, sick or defective, passive and engaged in anal sex. The latter showed the highest correlation with internalized shame. Stereotypes, such as lacking masculinity and sexually perverse, showed significant positive correlations with shame.

Sherry's (2007) research on internalized homophobia and attachment style among lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) persons confirmed earlier findings by Allen & Oleson (1999). The scholar found a positive moderate association between shame and internalized homonegativity. These two variables were in turn negatively related to secure romantic relationships.

The current study hypothesised that gay men's experience of internalized homonegativity can be predicted by internalized shame, culture as well as two facets of religion (religious orientation and religious denomination).

1.7 Present Study

Substantial research has been completed in the area of cognitive dissonance, however, none of the scholars in the reviewed articles considered the combined effects of religion and culture on homosexual men. There is also limited cross-cultural literature on how Asian and Caucasian gay men reconcile their homosexual orientation and religious faith. This study investigates the process they follow when dealing with the internal conflict as well as the role of

religious denomination, religious orientation and internalized shame in shaping internalized homonegativity.

The following hypotheses were proposed:

1. Asian gay men will experience higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to Caucasian gay men
2. Gay men with intrinsic religious orientation will experience higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to extrinsically oriented gay men.
3. Gay men with one of the Abrahamic faiths (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) experience higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to:
 - Gay men with Alternative/New Age faith (Buddhists, Agnostics, Wiccan and Spiritual people)
 - Gay men with no religion (Atheists)
4. Internalized homonegativity will be predicted by culture, internalized shame, religious orientation and religious faith.

2. METHOD

2.1 Participants

The sample used in this study was a convenience sample involving 133 participants. The sample included adult gay men between the ages of 20 and 80 ($M=37.08$ years, $SD=12.26$ years) recruited from Western ($N=116$) and Eastern ($N=17$) countries (see Appendix F for the list of specific countries). The survey was active for a five-month period during which the respondents completed the online survey in the English language. On average it took 20-30 minutes to complete the survey. 78% of those who started to fill out the questionnaire fully completed it. The majority of participants identified themselves as homosexual (94.0%), however, there were some bisexual (4.5%) as well as heterosexual respondents (1.5%). The responses from female participants were removed from the study as the study focused on self-identified gay men or men, who had sex with other men, but did not consider themselves gay. The responses from straight-identified gay men who had sex with other men were also included in the study.

Most participants reported their ethnicity as Caucasian (79.7%) or Asian (20.3%). The main reported religions belonged either to one of the three main Abrahamic faiths (45.1%) or to Philosophical/New Age religions (16.5%). Approximately 38.3% of participants reported having no religion. A full list of all reported ethnic backgrounds and religious faiths can be found in Appendix G and Appendix H, respectively. The majority of the participants (92.5%) had completed some sort of technical training or received a university degree and only 7.5% indicated high school as their highest level of education.

2.2 Procedure

The Australian respondents were recruited via an Internet link posted on gay-related sites such as Sydney Star Observer, Pinkboard and popular gay Facebook groups. The survey flyer with the URL to the survey was distributed via email messages to friends as well as to various gay support groups based in Australia (e.g. ALEPH and i ragazzi). These support groups were found on the Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council's website. The respondents from Asian countries were recruited via Internet links posted on the Gaystation, Sticky Rice and Blessed Minority Christian Fellowship (BMCF) sites.

Gay men who clicked on the URL to the survey were initially greeted with an introductory overview of the research study (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was uploaded to Survey Monkey, a website that allows people to post personalized questionnaires. Introduction to the survey included the purpose of the study, privacy and confidentiality information, researchers' backgrounds and qualifications as well as their contact details. Consent to participate was implied by those who decided to continue with the survey.

The survey included questions related to demographic, personal and social factors deemed theoretically relevant to the study of Asian and Caucasian gay men (see Appendix B). The subsequent measures were administered as a battery questionnaire in the following order: Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (Brewczynski & MacDonald, 2006), Internalized Shame Scale (Cook, 1996) and Internalized Homonegativity Inventory for Gay Men (Mayfield, 2001). The full scales can be found in Appendices C, D, and E, respectively. The study reported some of the data collected from the survey which was relevant to the purpose of the present research study.

The research study was approved by the Macquarie University's Ethics Review Committee.

2.3 Measures

Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (Brewczynski & MacDonald, 2006). The Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale was based on the original 20-item Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) developed by Allport & Ross (1967) with an extra extrinsic item found in Feagin (1964). The scale measures a person's religious orientation and assesses whether an individual's religiosity is due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors. The self-report inventory contains a total of 21 items out of which nine items assess intrinsic religious orientation (intrinsic scale) and 12 items measure extrinsic religious orientation (extrinsic scale). The intrinsically religious person possesses an internal motivation to follow religion whereas for the extrinsically religious person the reasons for being religious are mostly external to him. The extrinsic scale is further divided between social extrinsic and personal extrinsic orientation. The former is defined as using religion for social gain whereas the latter stand for using religion for comfort, security and protection.

The Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale is based on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) allowing participants to indicate how much they agree or disagree with the statements on religion. The scores in the upper range (agree and strongly agree) indicate an intrinsic orientation or, conversely, an extrinsic religious orientation when scoring the lower range (disagree and strongly disagree). For example, "I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life" and "The purpose of prayer is to secure a happy and peaceful life" are indicative of intrinsic and extrinsic subscales, respectively.

The inventory has a strong focus on Christianity as it was developed to measure an individual's religious orientation among various Christian denominations such as Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Nazarene (Allport, et al; Brewczynsky, et al.). In the current study, specific words descriptive of Christian faith such as "services", "Bible" and "church" were replaced with "religious meetings", "scripture" and "church/mosque/temple/synagogue", respectively in order to ensure the relevance of the questionnaire to all religious beliefs.

Internal consistencies reported for the intrinsic scale range from adequate to excellent, with Cronbach's alphas in the mid .80s. On the other hand, the inventory has shown to demonstrate lower internal consistencies for the extrinsic scale, with Cronbach's alphas in the low .70s (Hill & Hood, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1989 cited in Brewczynski & MacDonald). The Cronbach's alphas for the current study were found to be .96 for the intrinsic scale and .87 for the extrinsic scale.

Internalized Shame Scale (ISS; Cook, 1996). The ISS is the most widely used shame scale today, which was originally developed by David Cook in 1987 (del Rosario & White, 2006). The Internalized Shame Scale is a 30-item self-report inventory, which measures trait shame. It has two subscales that include 24 negatively worded items measuring internalized shame (e.g. I feel somehow left out) and six positively worded items assessing self-esteem (e.g. I take a positive attitude toward myself). The shame score is based on the responses to the 24 items where scores of 50 or above indicate painful or problematical levels of internalized shame. The purpose of the self-esteem subscale is to prevent response set bias. However, it can also be used to measure positive self-esteem (Cook, 1996).

The ISS is based on a five-point Likert-type scale from 0 to 4, with each number corresponding to the following words, “*Never*”, “*Seldom*”, “*Sometimes*”, “*Often*” and “*Almost Always*”, respectively. Participants are asked to indicate the frequency of feeling or experiencing what is described in each statement.

In terms of internal consistency, Cook (1996) reports shame scale Cronbach’s alpha to be .95 and .96 for non-clinical and clinical samples. The high reliability was supported by del Rosario and White’s (2006) research where the alpha coefficients ranged from .88 to .96. The current research revealed similar Cronbach’s alpha of .96 for the ISS.

Internalized Homonegativity Inventory for Gay Men (IHNI, Mayfield, 2001). The Internalized Homonegativity Inventory (IHNI) measures internalized homonegativity in gay men. Homonegativity is defined as possessing internalized negative attitudes towards homosexuality. It is a 23-item self-report instrument, which is based on a six point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Participants need to indicate the extent to which each item describes them. The higher the scores the greater level of internalized homonegativity.

The IHNI consists of three subscales, namely, Personal Homonegativity, Gay Affirmation and Morality of Homosexuality. Personal Homonegativity subscale consists of 11 items, which measure the degree of negative emotions and attitudes that gay men experience about their own homosexuality (e.g. I feel ashamed of my homosexuality). The seven items comprising the Gay Affirmation subscale are related to having positive beliefs about homosexuality (e.g. I am proud to be gay). The third subscale – Morality of Homosexuality – consists of only five items, which indicate moral beliefs towards same-sex behaviours (e.g. In my opinion, homosexuality is harmful to the order of society).

Mayfield (2001) reported strong evidence for the reliability and validity of the Internalized Homonegativity Inventory for Gay Men. The author demonstrated the internal consistency reliabilities of the IHNI and its subscales ranged from moderate to high. The coefficient alpha of the entire inventory was found to be .91, whereas the subscales – Personal Homonegativity, Gay Affirmation and Morality of homosexuality – to be .89, .82 and .70, respectively. The current study revealed Cronbach's alphas of .93 for the total IHNI, .92 for Personal Homonegativity subscale, .82 for Gay Affirmation and .6 Morality of Homosexuality subscales.

Overall, the inventories employed for this research project were well-established scales with good construct, convergent and discriminant validity. The present study employed both quantitative measures as well as qualitative analyses to satisfy the purpose of the current research project.

2.4 Qualitative Analyses

Qualitative analyses were conducted to reveal how Caucasian and Asian gay men integrate their religion and homosexuality. Thematic approach was employed during the response analysis to the question: "How do you explain or try to integrate your religious and sexual practices?"

Individual responses can be found in Appendix I.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Overview of analyses

Data were analysed using the Pearson's product-moment correlation, independent samples t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Tukey HSD and multiple linear regression. SPSS Version 17 was employed to run these statistical tests. Preliminary tests were conducted using the non-parametric tests (Spearman's rank order correlation, Mann-Whitney *U* test and Kruskal-Wallis) as some of the variables did not have normal distributions. The significant results of non-parametric tests were similar to the equivalent parametric test results. Therefore, the results of the parametric tests were reported in this study. A minimum alpha level of 0.05 was accepted to control for type 1 error.

3.2. Descriptive statistics

Independent variables identified in this study were: culture (Caucasian and Asian), religious orientation (intrinsic religious orientation and extrinsic religious orientation), religious faith (Abrahamic faiths, Philosophical/New age and no religious faith) and internalized shame. The independent variable was total internalized homonegativity (total IHNI) consisting of personal homonegativity, gay affirmation and morality of homosexuality). The means, standard deviations and Cronbach's coefficient alphas are listed in Table 1 for the scale variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of Caucasian and Asian samples

Variables	Caucasian sample			Asian sample			Between groups differences		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	alpha	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Intrinsic	97	2.26	1.15	22	2.81	1.14	0.94	-2.02	.05*
Extrinsic	97	2.05	0.75	22	2.66	0.77	0.87	-3.41	.00**
Shame	90	2.01	0.79	18	1.99	0.53	0.96	0.08	.94
IHNI (total)	90	1.61	0.64	18	1.63	0.58	0.93	-0.16	.88
Personal homonegativity	89	1.54	0.76	18	1.69	0.64	0.92	-0.77	.45
Gay affirmation	90	1.86	0.78	18	1.78	0.83	0.82	0.39	.70
Morality of homosexuality	90	1.36	0.66	18	1.31	0.51	0.6	0.32	.75

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

The skewness and kurtosis for each of these variables were examined. There were no values greater than an absolute value of two with the exception of morality of homosexuality (skewness=2.99). Testing for kurtosis identified that intrinsic religious orientation, extrinsic religious orientation, internalized shame and gay affirmation have close to a normal distribution. However, total internalized homonegativity, personal homonegativity and morality of homosexuality have a leptokurtic distribution with an absolute value greater than two. Examination of histograms for these variables demonstrated deviation from the normal distribution (see Appendix J).

3.3. Quantitative Analyses

Hypothesis 1. Internalized homonegativity and culture

This hypothesis stated that Asian gay men will experience higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to Caucasian gay men. Contrary to the hypothesis 1, this study found that there was no significant difference between Asian and Caucasian gay men in terms of internalized homonegativity (including total internalized homonegativity, personal homonegativity, gay affirmation and morality of homosexuality). An independent samples *t*-test revealed that there was no significant difference in total internalized homonegativity between Asian ($M=1.63$, $SD=0.58$) and Caucasian ($M=1.61$, $SD=0.64$) gay men, $t(106)=-.16$, $p>.05$ (see Table 1).

Furthermore, these two distinct cultural groups, Asians ($M=1.69$, $SD=0.64$) and Caucasians ($M=1.54$, $SD=0.76$), didn't differ significantly in terms of mean personal homonegativity ($t(105)=-.77$, $p>.05$). Moreover, there was no significant difference in the mean scores on gay affirmation subscale for Asians ($M=1.78$, $SD=0.83$) and Caucasians ($M=1.86$, $SD=0.78$), $t(106)=.39$, $p>.05$. The mean scores between Asian ($M=0.31$, $SD=0.51$) and Caucasian ($M=0.36$, $SD=0.66$) gay men did not demonstrate a significant difference on morality of homosexuality subscale either. These findings were also confirmed by Pearson correlations between total IHNI and culture (see Table 2).

Thus, Asian or Caucasian ethnic background is not associated with the levels of total internalized homonegativity, personal homonegativity, gay affirmation and morality of homosexuality.

Hypothesis 2. Religious orientation and internalized homonegativity

The hypothesis predicted that gay men's intrinsic religious orientation rather than their extrinsic religiosity will be associated with the internalized homonegativity. Consistent with the prediction, gay men with more intrinsic religious orientation experienced higher levels of total internalized homonegativity. However, gay men's extrinsic religiosity was not related to their total internalized homonegativity.

As shown in Table 2, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysed the relationship between gay men's total internalized homonegativity, intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations. The study demonstrated a significant positive but weak correlation between intrinsic religious orientation and total internalized homonegativity ($r=.20, p<.05$). Thus, gay men who are more intrinsically religious also tend to have higher total internalized homonegativity compared to those who are less intrinsically religious.

Table 2. Correlation matrix of the mean values of independent and dependent variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Intrinsic	--	.69**	-.40**	.15	.20*	.26**	.01	.15	.18*
2. Extrinsic		--	-.42**	.12	.17	.21*	-.03	.22*	.30**
3. Religion			--	-.10	-.27**	-.28**	-.15	-.21*	.04
4. Shame				--	.36**	.43**	.14	.28**	.01
5. Total homonegativity					--	.94**	.81**	.66**	-.02
6. Personal homonegativity						--	.68**	.56**	.08
7. Gay affirmation							--	.29**	-.04
8. Morality of homosexuality								--	-.03
9. Culture									--

Note. Significant correlations are shown in boldface

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

Hypothesis 3. Religious faith and internalized homonegativity

This hypothesis stated that gay who follow Abrahamic faiths (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) will experience higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to gay men with Philosophical/New Age religions (such as Buddhism, Spirituality, Wiccan) or gay atheists.

A one-way between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) compared the mean total internalized homonegativity score between the atheists and two religious groups, namely those of Abrahamic faiths (i.e. Christian, Muslim and Jewish) and Philosophical/New Age. This test was found to be statistically significant $F(2,105)=4.22, p<.05$, specifically it indicated that the three groups differed.

Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the group means using a Tukey HSD test. As predicted, there was a significant difference at the .05 level of significance between the means of the group that comprised individuals of the Abrahamic faiths and the group that comprised individuals with no religion. However, contrary to the hypothesis, no significant differences were found between the mean for the group comprised of individuals who professed Philosophical/New Age religions and the mean for the other two groups. Thus, gay men of Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths experienced significantly higher levels of internalized homonegativity compared to their peers with no religious faith.

Hypothesis 4. Prediction of internalized homonegativity

The hypothesis stated that internalized homonegativity could be predicted by culture, internalized shame, intrinsic religious orientation and Abrahamic religious faith in Christianity, Islam or Judaism. Since no significant difference was found between the Asian and Caucasian gay men in internalized homonegativity (see Table 1), multiple regression analyses were conducted on the whole sample. A backward regression analysis was employed in order to

ascertain the best model of prediction. The results of the full regression model and the reduced regression model are displayed in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively.

The multiple regression analysis indicated that the full model predicted 19.1% of variance internalized homonegativity, ($F(3, 104)=8.21, p<.01$). Intrinsic religiosity was removed from the model as backward linear regression did not indicate a significant prediction $\Delta=.06, t(104)=-.65, p>.05$. This resulted in 18.8% prediction of variance. The reduced model of regression was almost as good as the full model in predicting internalized homonegativity losing only 0.3% of the explained variance.

Table 3. Summary of full regression model predicting total IHNI

Variable	r	R ²	B	β	t
Shame	0.36**	0.13	0.3	0.36	4.00**
Intrinsic	0.2*	0.04	0.11	0.2	2.12*
Abrahamic faith	-0.27**	0.07	0.17	0.27	2.91**

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

Table 4. Summary of reduced regression model predicting total IHNI

Variable	r	R ²	B	β	t
Shame	0.36**	0.13	0.3	0.36	4.00**
Abrahamic faith	-0.27**	0.07	0.17	0.27	2.91**

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

In summary, internalized homonegativity in gay men was predicted by internalized shame and Abrahamic religious faith in Christianity, Islam or Judaism. A reduced model containing shame and Abrahamic faith predicted 18.8% of variance in internalized homonegativity. However, the 81.2% variance remains unexplained.

3.4 Qualitative Analyses

Qualitative analyses were conducted to reveal how Caucasian and Asian gay men integrate their religion and homosexuality. Thematic approach was employed during the response analysis to the question: “How do you explain or try to integrate your religious and sexual practices?” Individual responses can be found in Appendix I.

Approximately 50% of the gay men who follow one of the three Abrahamic religions could not integrate religion with their homosexuality due to an inherent conflict between the two (e.g. “I cannot explain they are in conflict one with one another”). The remaining gay men who associated themselves with traditional religious teachings responded that they successfully integrated their homosexuality with religious beliefs. They pursued one of the following ways: adopted a liberal interpretation of the Bible (e.g. “The most recent translations of the bible which say homosexuality is a sin are mis-translated”.); kept organized religion separate from God (e.g. “I have a good faith and relationship with God. I feel organised religion has very little to do with this relationship”); or believed that they were made gay by God (e.g. “God loves and God made me the way I am. There must be a reason he did so because if he did not like it he could change my orientation.”).

Those respondents who associated themselves with Philosophical/New Age religions found no conflict between their sexual practices and religion as their religious denomination accepted homosexuality. For example, one of the participants in the study stated that “Buddhism and homosexuality don’t really conflict with each other when concerning the philosophical side of Buddhism.” Those gay men that were grouped under “no religion” felt that the integration between religious and sexual practices was irrelevant. There were some who had abandoned their religions as they could not integrate their homosexuality with religious dogma. For example, one

gay man stated that “[integration] was impossible, so I abandoned religion in favour of homosexuality – I realise you don’t have to choose between them anymore.”

3.5 Summary

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were presented in the results section. Qualitative analyses demonstrated that gay men from distinct faith groups integrated religion and sexuality while experiencing cognitive dissonance. On the other hand, quantitative analyses showed the predictors of internalized homonegativity – a form of cognitive dissonance – explaining only 18.8% of variance. A large amount of variance remains unexplained.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Summary of findings

The current study provided some empirical evidence to help understand how Caucasian and Asian gay men integrate their religious beliefs, culture and sexuality. The findings disconfirmed the predicted cultural differences in internalized homonegativity between Caucasian and Asian gay men. Specifically, no significant difference was found between these two cultural groups in terms of their experience of total internalized homonegativity, personal homonegativity, gay affirmation and morality of homosexuality. For the entire sample, total internalized homonegativity was predicted by internalized shame and the three main Abrahamic religious faiths.

The study provided support to previous research on the relationship between religious denomination, religious orientation and internalized homonegativity. Gay men with more intrinsic religious orientation were found to harbour higher levels of total internalized homonegativity compared to the extrinsically oriented gay men. In addition, Abrahamic faith

which unites Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious gay men, experienced higher levels of total internalized homonegativity than non-believers. Integrating religious beliefs with sexuality varied from one faith group to the other. Some followers of one of the main Abrahamic faiths found ways to integrate their religious beliefs with their sexual practises while others couldn't successfully integrate the two due to an inherent conflict between homosexuality and religious dogma. Most of the gay men who identified themselves with a Philosophical/New Age faith considered their religion being accepting of their sexuality. The non-religious group included gay men who had abandoned religion due to the irreconcilable internal conflict between their faith and homosexuality.

The qualitative analysis supported the Cognitive Theory model by demonstrating that traditional (non-affirming) religious faith and homosexuality exist in conflict with one another. However, the statistical analysis challenged the theory, which states that as the number of conflicting cognitions or beliefs increase so does the level of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). In the current study, culture did not have an additive effect on the cognitive dissonance between the sexuality and religion. It is also important to note that Peng and Nisbett's (1999) reasoning about contradictions was not supported either by these findings. This interpretation should be treated with caution because Asian sample was smaller compared to the Caucasian sample.

4.2 Links to past research

Hypothesis 1. The current study disconfirmed hypothesis 1, which stated that Asian gay men would harbour higher levels of homonegativity compared to their Caucasian counterparts. In addition, no significant differences were demonstrated in personal homonegativity, gay

affirmation and morality of homosexuality between the two cultural groups. The data provided a significant departure from previous studies, which supported an argument that the experience of homonegativity varies from culture to culture or from one ethnic group to the other (Rosario, Schrimshaw and Hunter, 2004; Ross, Rosser, Neumaier, and the Positive Connections Team, 2008; Ratti, Bakeman & Peterson (2000)). However, the results of the present research support Dube and Savin-Williams' (1999) findings of no significant difference in IHNI between Asian and Caucasian gay men.

There could be an alternative explanation to the apparent lack of differences between the two cultural groups. It is possible that the Asian sample was somewhat 'Westernised' and, therefore, similar to the Caucasian sample. More than one third of the Asian respondents resided in Australia hence they could have been raised and/or educated in Western tradition.

Hypothesis 2. As predicted, gay men with intrinsic religious orientation displayed greater levels of total internalized homonegativity compared to extrinsically oriented gay men. This finding strengthens Tozer and Hayes (2004) research on relationship between intrinsic religiosity and IHNI. These results are not surprising considering that intrinsic religiousness is a direct expression of religion's influence on a person's life (Ahrold & Meston, 2008). Therefore, heterosexist teachings of main monotheistic religions can be associated with gay men's increased internalized homonegativity.

Hypothesis 3. The current study hypothesised that gay men with with one of the Abrahamic faiths would experience higher levels of total internalized homonegativity compared to those with Philosophical/New Age religious beliefs or those with no religious beliefs. The results confirmed the prediction and provided support to previous research on non-affirming and

affirming religions by Farnsworth (2002 cited in Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008) and Lease, Horne and Noffsinger-Frazier (2005).

Hypothesis 4. The findings supported the prediction of the current study in that IHNI was found to be predicted by internalized shame and Abrahamic religious faiths. As shown above religious faith and internalized shame are significantly associated with IHNI. In addition, previous research (Allen & Oleson, 1999; Sherry, 2007) on internalized shame and internalized homonegativity found a significant positive relationship between these two important variables among gay men. It is important to note that the majority of variance could not be explained by the present study.

4.4 Strengths and limitations of present research

A major strength of this study was the use of both quantitative and qualitative analyses to investigate internal conflict as well as integration between religious beliefs, culture and sexuality in Asian and Caucasian gay men.

The methodologies and procedure used by the current study were generally satisfactory. All attempts were made to cater for the specific needs of the recruited sample. For example, items in Allport's Religious Orientation Scale were modified specifically for the current study from its original Christian-centric questions to more generalized questions relevant to other religions, such as Judaism, Islam and Buddhism. According to Allen & Oleson (1999), gay men who possess the attributes of a shy person with higher levels of shame and lower self-esteem would be less likely to take part in a survey. An attempt was made to address this concern by employing an online survey and thus, increasing the opportunity for reticent gay men to participate. Riggle, Rostovsky and Reedy (2005) stated that one of the advantages for using

online surveys is that it provides increased privacy and, therefore, promotes opportunities for honest answers. The authors also provided research evidence arguing that online surveys are the most suitable and effective tool for doing research with gay men.

One of the main limitations of the study was that gay men were recruited from gay identified sources. Therefore, the study involved those gay men who self-identified their sexual orientation and were actively involved within the gay community. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that the participants were similar to each other. The sample was a highly educated, predominantly Caucasian group of Anglo-Australian background who had access to Internet.

Another major weakness of the study was utilising the English language limiting the size of the Asian sample. Approximately one fifth of the participants started but did not complete the online survey. Certain questions were probably difficult to understand for non-native English speakers. Also, the survey was 30 minutes long, which could have resulted in fatigue and the decreased motivation to complete the survey. Both cultural groups skipped certain parts of the questionnaire. As the study focused on diverse cultural groups, it should have provided the survey in some Asian languages (e.g. Mandarin, Cantonese and Indonesian) hence increasing the accessibility to non-English speakers of Asian backgrounds. Thus, the small size of the Asian sample and selectivity of the total sample limited general applicability of the findings. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the current research sample was a relatively inaccessible subgroup of the population rendering it almost impossible to obtain a random sample.

4.5 Future directions

Future studies would need to address the limitations outlined in the present study.

In order for the present findings to be confirmed, it is recommended that the current study is replicated with an Asian sample of equal size to the Caucasian sample. Until then the interpretations need to be treated with some caution. For the purposes of recruiting more Asian gay men from various Asian countries, the online survey would need to be translated into main Asian languages to increase the geographic and cultural reach. According to the current study the most common Asian languages were Cantonese, Mandarin and Malaysian. Offering the option of completing the online survey in participants' native language will significantly increase the number of respondents. In instances where future researchers are unable to provide the surveys in Asian languages, a pilot study would need to be conducted to check if all the questions are clear to both native English speakers and non-native English speakers. Another option for increasing the number of participants would be to include a message at the end of the survey similar to the following: "Please help us spread the word about this research by forwarding the link to your friends who would be interested in completing the questionnaire."

Future studies recruiting Asian gay men would need to ensure that their sample is a true representation of gay men in Asia. Therefore, it would be advisable to develop a culture-specific scale, which would consider cultural specificities in Asia to an extent possible. This scale would be able to determine how well Asian gay men adhere to their cultural values and customs (especially in countries where homosexuality is considered as illegal) despite their sexuality.

Approximately 80% of variance in internalized homonegativity could not be explained by the present data. Alderson (2003) argued that homosexuality was a multidimensional phenomenon the features of which are interrelated. Therefore, future research would need to investigate other traits of homonegativity such as gay men's self-esteem, upbringing, support networks, peer pressure, social isolation, bullying at workplace, and other socio-environmental

factors not investigated in the current study. Furthermore, the present study investigated religious faiths and religious orientations but did not include religious upbringing, religious self-schema and salience of religious identity, which are considered important facets of religion by Sheeran, Abrams, Abraham and Spears (1993). Future researchers would need to consider all dimensions of religion in order not to miss more significant features.

The present study analysed gay men's integration of religion and their sexuality at one point in time. In order to understand the process of reducing cognitive dissonance and increasing integration, the future research would need to be conducted using a gay men's sample at different stages of identity development. This would deepen the current understanding of integration of conflicting identities over time and assist psychologists develop diverse therapeutic techniques specific to gay men at different stages. In addition to this, future research needs to look farther by exploring cognitive dissonance and integration of conflicting cognitions in more hidden subgroups of population such as same-sex attracted men who do not self-identify themselves as gay as well as men questioning their sexuality. Certain groups maybe at a higher risk of developing internalized homonegativity.

4.6 Conclusion

The current study has provided some interesting findings about Asian and Caucasian gay men who struggle to integrate their religious beliefs and homosexuality. The results indicated significant relationship between internalized homonegativity and other variables such as internalized shame, intrinsic religiosity and religious faith. The findings did not support the argument that Asian and Caucasian gay men harbour different levels of internalized

homonegativity. Nevertheless more research needs to be done to further understand the interplay between culture, religion and sexuality.

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APPENDIX A INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

We are investigating sexual behaviour and a range of other factors including religion, experience of forming relationships, and feelings about yourself and your life. You are invited to participate in this study of your sexual experience and the other factors specified above. The survey will ask questions about:

- Your personal sexual experience.
- Your feelings about yourself.
- The nature of the feelings you have in close relationships and how close you like to be to intimate relationships,
- Your feelings about the importance of religion in your life.

Approximately 100 surveys will be completed. It should take you about 20-30 minutes to complete this survey on line.

The study is being conducted by Dr Jac Brown, Senior Lecturer at Macquarie University (telephone +612 9850 8094) in Sydney and Diana Qwok, Instructor at City University of Hong Kong (telephone +852-27888135). Post graduate Diploma students from Macquarie University will also be provided with these data to write up their theses.

Should you agree to participate, you will be required to complete a survey by going to a web address (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yT9GaHot0qK3dHSfEXc4Wg_3d_3d.) where you be prompted to click responses and comment on your experience with sex, your own experience in a range of personal relationships, and your reflections about yourself, and your own thoughts and behaviour about religion. This may cause you some distress as you think and report on events and feelings that you have about the significant people in your life. Once you have completed the questionnaire online, you will be asked to submit it for analysis at Macquarie University in Australia. If you are completing first year psychology at Macquarie University you will receive credit towards your final mark in psychology based on your participation.

Any information obtained from the questionnaire will not be associated with you and thus is completely confidential. Once you have completed the survey, you will not be asked to participate in any further way. Anonymous information obtained from your responses will be analysed as a group by computer and published in scientific journals. Thus, individual responses cannot be associated with you once you have submitted the questionnaire online.

Should you wish to have the findings of this study made available to you, simply send an email to jbrown@psy.mq.edu.au requesting that feedback on the survey be provided so that information may be sent to you once it has been analysed.

If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any stage while completing the survey. If you find that while you are completing the questionnaire, that you do not feel comfortable answering the questions, simply do not complete the remainder of the survey and do not submit it. This survey is in no way related to your work as a student and thus there will be no impact on your

studies should you decide not to participate. Submitting your completed survey is indication that you agree to participate in the project and that you have been informed about any consequences of participating.

Should you feel distressed by any of the questions in the survey, please contact in Sydney: Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service on 02 8594 9596; or in Hong Kong: Counseling Practice Center - Sexuality Counseling Project City University of Hong Kong on 2788-8135.

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (telephone [+612] 9850 7854, fax [+612] 9850 4465, email: ethics@mq.edu.au). In Hong Kong, you may contact Diana Kwok (telephone 852-2788-8135). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

FLYER FOR HONG KONG:

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

We are investigating sexual behaviour and a range of other factors including religion, experience of forming relationships, and feelings about yourself and your life. You are invited to participate in this study of your sexual experience and the other factors specified above. The survey will ask questions about:

- Your personal sexual experience.
- Your feelings about yourself.
- The nature of the feelings you have in close relationships and how close you like to be to intimate relationships,
- Your feelings about the importance of religion in your life.

The study is being conducted by Dr Jac Brown, Senior Lecturer at Macquarie University (telephone +612 9850 8094) in Sydney, Australia and and Diana Qwok, Instructor at City University of Hong Kong (telephone +852-27888135). Post graduate Diploma students from Macquarie University will also use this data to write up their theses.

Should you agree to participate, you will be required to complete a survey on line at the web address listed below. When you are online, you will be required to click responses and comment on aspects of your own experience in a range of personal relationships, and also your ideas about your own thoughts and behaviour. The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Completing this survey may cause you some distress as you think and report on events and feelings that you have about the significant people in your life. Once you have completed the questionnaire online, you will be asked to submit it for analysis at Macquarie University in Australia. Students from Macquarie University will receive course credit for completing the survey online.

Any information obtained from the questionnaire will not be associated with you personally and thus is completely confidential. Once you have completed the survey, you will not be asked to participate in any further way. Anonymous information obtained from your responses will be analysed as a group by computer and published in scientific journals. Thus, individual responses cannot be associated with you personally once you have submitted the questionnaire online.

Should you wish to be involved in this survey, simply go to the website below to participate:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yT9GaHot0qK3dHSfEXc4Wg_3d_3d.

FLYER FOR SYDNEY WEBSITE:

SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IN BUDDHIST, CHRISTIAN, JEWISH, AND MUSLIM MEN

We are investigating sexual behaviour and a range of other factors including religion, experience of forming relationships, and feelings about yourself and your life. You are invited to participate in this study of your sexual experience and the other factors specified above. The survey will ask questions about:

- Your personal sexual experience.
- Your feelings about yourself.
- The nature of the feelings you have in close relationships and how close you like to be to intimate relationships,
- Your feelings about the importance of religion in your life.

The study is being conducted by Dr Jac Brown, Senior Lecturer at Macquarie University (telephone +612 9850 8094) in Sydney, Australia and and Diana Qwok, Instructor at City University of Hong Kong (telephone +852-27888135). Post graduate Diploma students from Macquarie University will also use this data to write up their theses.

Should you agree to participate, you will be required to complete a survey on line at the web address listed below. When you are online, you will be required to click responses and comment on aspects of your own experience in a range of personal relationships, and also your ideas about your own thoughts and behaviour. The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Completing this survey may cause you some distress as you think and report on events and feelings that you have about the significant people in your life. Once you have completed the questionnaire online, you will be asked to submit it for analysis at Macquarie University in Australia. Students from Macquarie University will receive course credit for completing the survey online.

Any information obtained from the questionnaire will not be associated with you personally and thus is completely confidential. Once you have completed the survey, you will not be asked to participate in any further way. Anonymous information obtained from your responses will be analysed as a group by computer and published in scientific journals. Thus, individual responses cannot be associated with you personally once you have submitted the questionnaire online.

Should you wish to be involved in this survey, simply go to the website below to participate:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yT9GaHot0qK3dHSfEXc4Wg_3d_3d.

**APPENDIX B.
DEMOGRAPHIC AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR
PART A**

1. How did you hear about this survey?
2. In what country do you live?
3. What was your first language?
4. What is your ethnic background?
5. How old are you?
6. Tick one: Male Female
7. Rate your interest in same and other sex on the following dimensions(Tick a box for each variable):

Variable	Other sex only	Other sex mostly	Other sex somewhat more	Both sexes	Same sex somewhat more	Same sex mostly	Same sex only
Sexual attraction							
Sexual Behaviour							
Sexual Fantasies							
Emotional Preference							
Social Preference (Lifestyle and Identification)							

Tick the box below that best describes you:

Heterosexual	Bisexual	Homosexual

8. What are your current living arrangements: (Please tick)

_____ Living by myself for how long (YEARS) ?

- _____ Living with a friend for how long (YEARS)?
- _____ Living with a male friend for how long (YEARS)?
- _____ Living with a female friend for how long (YEARS)?
- _____ Living with my wife For how long (YEARS)?
- _____ Living with my family For how long (YEARS)?

10. How many sexual partners have you have in the past 12 months?

Male partners: _____

Female partners: _____

11. How frequently do you have sex? (please tick correct boxes)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
With Female partners					
With Male partners					

12. If you have had sex, how old were you when you first had sex?

With a female? _____ How old was this female? _____

With a male? _____ How old was this male? _____

13. How many sexual partners have you had during your life?

Male partners _____

Female partners _____

14. How would you describe your sexual behaviour:

	Always Passive				Always Active
--	-------------------	--	--	--	------------------

With female partners					
With male partners					

15. How often do you protect yourself from sexually transmitted diseases when having sex:

	Never				Always
With female partners					
With male partners					

16. Are you currently in a romantic relationship? Yes _____ No _____

17. If you are currently in a romantic relationship, are you living with this person?

Yes No

18. If you are currently in a relationship, is this with a Man _____ or a Woman _____

19. How long have you been in this relationship? _____(YRS)

20. How old is your partner _____ (YRS)

21. What is the ethnic background of your partner? _____

22. Do you have sex outside this relationship. Yes_____ No _____

23. If yes, do you have any rules with your partner for how you will have sex outside the relationship? Yes_____ No _____

24. If yes, can you specify the rules? _____

25. Do you have anal sex in your relationship? Yes_____ No_____

26. If you have penetrative (anal/vaginal) sex, how often do you use condoms?

	Never				Always
With female partners					
With male partners					

27. Do you regularly have AIDS tests? Yes _____ No _____

28. As far as you know, are you currently HIV negative? Yes _____ No _____

29. How many people know that you are involved with others sexually?

	No one apart from sexual partners		Some know		Most people I know
Sex with women	1	2	3	4	5
Sex with men	1	2	3	4	5

30. How easily do you discuss your sexual preferences with others?

	Not Relevant as I don't have sex	I tell no one about this				I tell everyone about this
Sex with women	0	1	2	3	4	5
Sex with men	0	1	2	3	4	5

31. What would keep you from telling other people about your sexual attraction to men?

32. What is your highest level of education?

Primary school _____

High school _____

Technical training

University training _____

33. What is your religion? _____

34. How important is religion to you?

Not at all important				Extremely important
1	2	3	4	5

35. How do you explain or try to integrate your religious and sexual practices?

**APPENDIX C.
RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION**

Instructions: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding religion on the following rating scale:

	1	2	3	4	5			
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ Mixed		Strongly Agree			
				1	2	3	4	5
1. I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Quite often I have been keenly aware of the presence of God or the Divine Being.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The prayers I say when I am alone carry as much meaning and personal emotion as those said by me during religious meetings.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and meditation.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I read literature about faith.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. If I were to join a church/mosque/temple/ synagogue group, I would prefer to join a scripture study group (higher number), or a social fellowship (lower number)..				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. If not prevented by unavoidable circumstances, I attend church/mosque/temple/synagogue.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. The church/mosque/temple/synagogue is most important as a place to formulate good social relationships.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. The purpose of prayer is to secure a happy and				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

peaceful life.

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 12. What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. It doesn't matter so much what I believe so long as I lead a moral life. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. Although I am a religious person, I refuse to let religious considerations influence my everyday affairs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. I pray chiefly because I have been taught to pray. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. A primary reason for my interest in religion is that my church/mosque/temple/synagogue is a congenial social activity. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. Occasionally I find it necessary to compromise my religious beliefs in order to protect my social and economic well-being. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. The primary purpose of prayer is to gain relief and protection. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in my life. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. Religion helps to keep my life balanced and steady in exactly the same way as my citizenship, friendships, and other memberships do. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. One reason for my being a church/mosque/temple/synagogue member is that such membership helps to establish a person in the community. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

APPENDIX D.

INTERNALIZED SHAME

Below is a list of statements describing feelings or experiences that you may have from time to time or that are familiar to you because you have had these feelings and experiences for a long time. Most of these statements describe feelings and experiences that are generally painful or negative in some way. Some people will seldom or never have had many of these feelings. Everyone has had some of these feelings at some time, but if you find that these statements describe the way you feel a good deal of the time, it can be painful just reading them. Try to be as honest as you can in responding.

Read each statement carefully and tick the appropriate box that indicates the frequency with which you find yourself feeling or experiencing what is described in the statement. Be sure to answer every item.

- 0 - Never
- 1 - Seldom
- 2 - Sometimes
- 3 - Often
- 4 - Almost Always

1. I feel like I am never quite good enough.
2. I feel somehow left out.
3. I think that people look down on me.
4. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a success.
5. I scold myself and put myself down.
6. I feel insecure about others' opinions of me.
7. Compared to other people, I feel like I somehow never measure up.
8. I see myself as being very small and insignificant.
9. I feel I have much to be proud of.

10. I feel intensely inadequate and full of self-doubt.
11. I feel as if I am somehow defective as a person, like there is something basically wrong with me.
12. When I compare myself to others I am just not as important.
13. I have an overpowering dread that my faults will be revealed in front of others.
14. I feel I have a number of good qualities.
15. I see myself striving for perfection only to continually fall short.
16. I think others are able to see my defects.
17. I could beat myself over the head with a club when I make a mistake.
18. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
19. I would like to shrink when I make a mistake.
20. I replay painful events over and over in my mind until I am overwhelmed.
21. I feel I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with others.
22. At times I feel like I will break into a thousand pieces.
23. I feel as if I have lost control over my body functions and my feelings.
24. Sometimes I feel no bigger than a pea.
25. At times I feel so exposed that I wish the earth would open up and swallow me.
26. I have this painful gap within me that I have not been able to fill.

27. I feel empty and unfulfilled.

28. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

29. My loneliness is more like emptiness.

30. I feel like there is something missing.

APPENDIX E.
INTERNALIZED HOMONEGATIVITY

Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which you agree or disagree on issues describing homosexuality. If you do not identify as gay, please imagine how you think you would feel regarding these issues.

Please use the scale below by ticking a box between 1 and 5 in the boxes provided to the right of each statement.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Strongly Disagree **Strongly Agree**

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I believe being gay is an important part of me.					
2. I believe it is OK for men to be attracted to other men in an emotional way, but its' not OK for them to have sex with each other.					
3. When I think of my homosexuality, I feel depressed.					
4. I believe that it is morally wrong for ment to have sex with other men.					
5. I feel ashamed of my homosexuality.					
6. I am thankful for my sexual orientation.					
7. When i think about my attraction towards men, I feel unhappy.					
8. I believe that more gay men should be shown in TV shows, movies, and commercials.					
9. I see my homosexuality as a gift.					
10. When people around me talk about homosexuality, I get nervous.					
11. I wish I could control my feelings of attraction toward other men.					
12. In general, I believe that homosexuality is as fulfilling as heterosexuality.					
13. I am disturbed when people can tell I'm gay.					

	1	2	3	4	5
14. In general, I believe that gay men are more immoral than straight men.					
15. Sometimes I get upset when i think about being attracted to men.					
16. In my opinion, homosexuality is harmful to the order of society.					
17. Sometimes i feel that I might be better off dead than gay.					
18. I sometimes resent my sexual orientation.					
19. I believe it is morally wrong for men to be attracted to each other.					
20. I sometimes feel that my homosexuality is embarrassing.					
21. I am proud to be gay.					
22. I believe that public schools should teach that homosexuality is normal.					
23. I believe it is unfair that I am attracted to men instead of women.					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Should you feel distressed by any of the questions in the survey, please contact in Sydney: Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service on 02 8594 9596; or in Hong Kong: Counseling Practice Center - Sexuality Counseling Project City University of Hong Kong on 2788-8135.

APPENDIX F.

PARTICIPANT'S COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE

1. Western: Australia 109; England 1; South Africa 1; United Kingdom 1; USA 4.
2. Eastern: Cambodia 1; China 3; Hong Kong 7; Malaysia 2; Philippines 1; Thailand 2; Vietnam 1.

APPENDIX G.

PARTICIPANTS' ETHNIC AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

1. Caucasian: Anglo-Celtic 4; Anglo-Celtic German 1; Anglo-Saxon 5; Australian 22; Australian Italian; Austrian Jew; British 2; British Polish 2; Caucasian 40; Caucasian/Anglo-Lebanese 1; Dutch 1; English 6; English and Dutch 1; European 2; European Jew 1; German Scottish 1; Greek 2; Irish 2; Australian Irish/German American 1; Italian 3; Maltese 1; Polish/Russian 1 Serbian 2; White 2; White European 2.
2. Asian: Asian 2; Australian born Chinese 1; Indonesian Chinese 1; Malaysian 1; Australian Chinese 1; Chinese 15; Chinese Malaysian 2; Han 2; Malay 2;

APPENDIX H.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

1. Abrahamic religions: Anglican 7; Church of England 2; Catholic 24; Christian 17; Christian-Pentecostal Charismatic 1; Christian – Uniting 1; Evangelical Christian 1; Islam 1; Jewish 2; Orthodox 1; Protestant 1; Raised Catholic but not practising 2.
2. Philosophical/New Age religions: Agnostic 2; Buddhist 4; Buddhist/Agnostic 1; “I have my own religious system” 1; Mostly atheist, dabble in Buddhism 1; “No organised religion, but I have very strong spiritual beliefs” 1; Pagan 2; Polytheism 1; Raised Christian but Agnostic 1; Spiritual 2; Spiritual/Esoteric 1; Unsure 1; Wiccan 3.
3. No religion: Antitheism 1; Atheist 12; Jewish Atheist 1; Nil 32; None (formerly Catholic); Not religious 3; “Spiritual, but not of any particular faith” 1; Was Buddhist 1.

Note: Where a participant indicated contradictory information in regards to his religious beliefs, the Importance of Religion scale was consulted to identify the respondent's faith. E.g. A gay man who stated that he was mostly atheist, but also dabbled in Buddhism, indicated that the religion was somewhat important on the Importance of Religion scale. Thus, he was grouped with Philosophical/New Age faith followers rather than with atheists.

APPENDIX I.

LIST OF RESPONSES TO ITEM, "HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN OR TRY TO INTEGRATE YOUR RELIGIOUS AND SEXUAL PRACTICES?"

- *I cannot explain they are in conflict one with the other*
- *No need*
- *NA (12 responses)*
- *My religious beliefs mean I value monogamy highly so incorporate this into my relationship.*
- *I FOLLOW THE BIBLE AS BEST AS I CAN AND I ATTEND CHURCH. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS WRONG TO HAVE SEX WITH SOMEONE YOU ARE VERY MUCH IN LOVE WITH.*
- *I believe that there is no Biblical restriction on what I do within legal constraints*
- *I recognize my sexual behavior out of wedlock is not necessarily sinful but unhealthy.*
- *no trouble*
- *They are not integrated.*
- *Don't have to*
- *My spiritual practices are based on respect for self and others, as well personal growth and evolution, as basic principles - do not buy into organised religion. No conflict with my sexual practices provided they are entered into similarly.*
- *I don't (20 responses)*
- *God does not judge, only people judge*
- *I identify myself as Catholic for many reasons, mainly it is my heritage and a community that I am a full member of. I separate the institutional hierarchical church from the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus- peace with justice.*
- *I feel like a liberal Christian... I don't believe homosexuality is sinful. But I am not sure about coming out, or how to meet people to date without coming out, so I have sex with men because that is easier - its doesn't effect my whole life. This feels like a betrayal of the hopes i have for my life (inspired by my religion), but I feel like I don't have any other choices at this stage in my life.*
- *reading books about how bible interpretations changed, and how societies evolved.*
- *Man was created in the image of god, and christ when on earth experienced all the realms of human existence as taught in the scriptures. I believe that we all have a reason for being on earth and we are all part of the master plan of god, it is only the perception and miss interpretation of the scriptures and man's ignorance over the centuries that has made being gay in today's society the way it is. Gay are no weaker nor stronger then anyone else and suffer the prejudices and hate of all others as does any one who does not commit to the accepted norm preached by the misinformed ignorant of the world.*
- *I believe the Gods traditionally worshiped by human beings are fictional. The "god" I believe in does not have human beings at the centre of its design and that "sin" is counter productive behaviour. It is not counter productive for homosexually or bisexually inclined people to seek affection and pleasure with those that they are attracted to so long as there is no exploitation or dishonesty in the relationship.*
- *My religion is accepting of homosexuality*

- *I struggle sometimes, however, humans are flawed and I accept this as apart of nature. I also believe that it is nature.*
- *From a Judeo-Christian perspective, I explain that I was born same-sex attracted, and that the Maker (whatever you want to call It/Him - i.e. God, the Universe, etc) made me this way and loves me this way and wants me to remain this way. I have a close relationship with the Maker and know in my heart that He/It doesn't care that I am attracted to men. I always say to everyone "God doesn't care about who I fuck, he only cares about who I fuck over." These concepts are nearly always lost on Christians, who then recoil at my use of the word "fuck", instantly repressing the conceptual meaning and focussing on the swear word. Every time. Without Fail. I also explain to them how I truly believe their God is ashamed of them for their views.*
- *Have studied a vast array of materials on Christianity and Homosexuality, from basic logic to more liberal interpretations of the Bible*
- *god made who I am*
- *With a lot of difficult. I believe that God made me the way I am and that as long as I stay true to my Christian faith and beliefs I will be welcome into Heaven when the time comes.*
- *I don't try to explain or integrate my religious and sexual practices. one doesn't exclude the other and vice versa.*
- *Religion tends to impose other (ancient dead people's) morals and personal standards on others. There is no need for that. Neither is there any need for religions to claim the moral high ground re ethics, morals and purpose in life. Those things are driven by the human drive to be cooperative social beings and whom form their strongest bonds through love.*
- *My sexual practices are between me and my "maker"*
- *I have a good faith and relationship with God. I feel organised religion has very little to do with this relationship.*
- *The most recent translations of the bible which say homosexuality is a sin are mis-translated*
- *I think that we are made in God's image and he loves us all - including if you are gay.*
- *I think it is still important to be Christ like in your words and actions*
- *I don't try to explain it, I have a belief, but see sexual practices as separate to it.*
- *not related*
- *I've accepted that there are some questions in life to which we don't yet have complete answers, and in the meantime, I do not feel any conflict between my christian values and my sexual practices.*
- *I was a pentecostal christian and tried "ex-gay" therapy. I harbour some ill-sentiment towards institutional religion (regardless of creed). However, if pressed, I'd say that if I was on my death bed and had to choose a deity to pray to it would be the Christian god. I doubt very much that any deity condemns queer people. It is human intolerance and institutions that say queer = bad.*
- *Not very relevant, though I try to live by high moral and ethical principles*
- *Buddhism and Homosexuality don't really conflict with each other when concerning the philosophical side of Buddhism.*
- *Don't have time to answer*
- *I don't accept my religions teachings about my sexuality.*

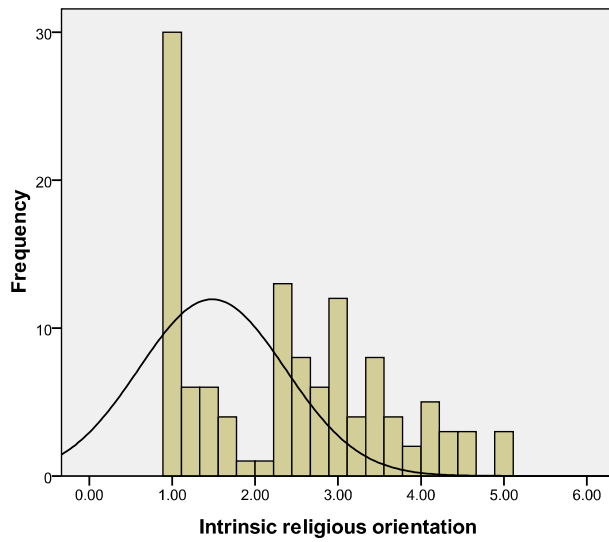
- *I do not connect the two*
- *I don't the two are completely separate*
- *Be content with who you are*
- *DOGMA has no further place in my life, but child-hood programming is very difficult to overcome. In the next section on "Religion" my answers are on "Personal Spirituality". I do need to be part of an organized religion to express my Spiritual Self.*
- *It goes along well for me. I believe on God, not the religious*
- *They are perfectly compatible and don't require integration.*
- *I can't*
- *I say I believe in god but that religious rules don't control my life*
- *They are not integrated at all. The moment I knew I was gay I also knew I couldn't be the Catholic I am expected to be. Especially not in a church that rejects me simply for the way God made me.*
- *I don't. I answer to god alone.*
- *There is nothing to integrate.*
- *no issue*
- *I believe religion is a man-made construct with no relevance to me, so I have no problem. :-)*
- *openly*
- *I don't! Innate hypocrisy of gay priests pisses me off (to say nothing of institutionalised paedophilia)*
- *I don't. I don't see a link between the two.*
- *never*
- *I have no religious beliefs*
- *Not relevant*
- *that was impossible, so I abandoned religion in favour of homosexuality -- i realise you don't have to choose between them anymore*
- *I do not believe in any religion. I am a Secular Humanist.*
- *Religion and homosexuality are like chalk and cheese*
- *I have no religious practices.*
- *I don't need to*
- *I think the most important thing is that its how u treat a person- no matter what religion. I try and live a 'Christian' lifestyle whereby I do to others how i would like things to be done to myself*
- *There is no conflict*
- *Humans by nature are flawed and imperfect. We all make mistakes and err in our behaviour whether that be sexual, financial, or other*
- *Don't try*
- *They don't relate - the question reflects more of a Christian sense of sin. As a Jew, you are a Jew...*
- *God loves and God made me the way i am. There must be a reason he did so because if he did not like it he could change my orientation
God loves me, and makes me gay*
- *I involved myself in church activities, and people accept me as who I am. Don't ask, Don't tell. We got a gay fellowship cell group formed.*

- *Don't need to*
- *I never mix them both*
- *By a liberal view on bible*
- *God made us to do any sex. Just safe sex*
- *I don't integrate sex with religion because I don't think religion has got to do with human sexual practices*
- *Not applicable*
- *I am who God created me*
- *They are irrelevant*
- *Nope!*
- *I have this respect with the religious teachings. But, as far as I'm concerns, I'm still entitled with my own free will. as long as I never hurt anyone, one way or another., I fell good about my self.*
- *Don't find the need to.*

- *My religion doesn't discriminate peoples , in western countries , I'm not sure where I'm from , think I will be still be discriminates*
- *They don't go together. Religion is religion; it doesn't impact upon sexual practices. At least not for me.*
- *I don't think about it*
- *Explain for? Never cross my mind there is a need to. btw, the answer for 13 is I lost count.. and you may like to change the logic to accept text as well*
- *normal*
- *can't answer*
- *nothing related to religious*
- *Is a kind of communication*
- *Never thought about it*

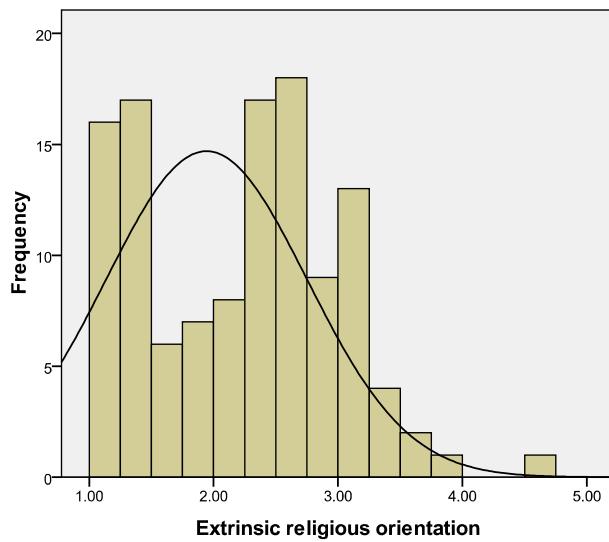
APPENDIX J.
DISTRIBUTION OF VARIABLES.

Intrinsic religious orientation



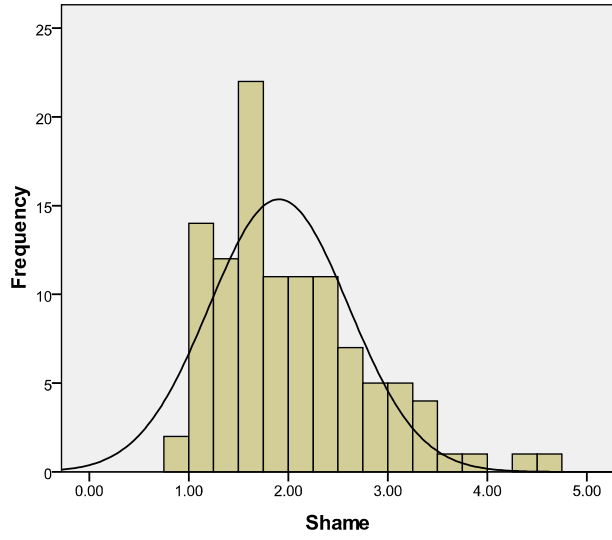
Mean =2.36
Std. Dev. =1.163
N=119

Extrinsic religious orientation



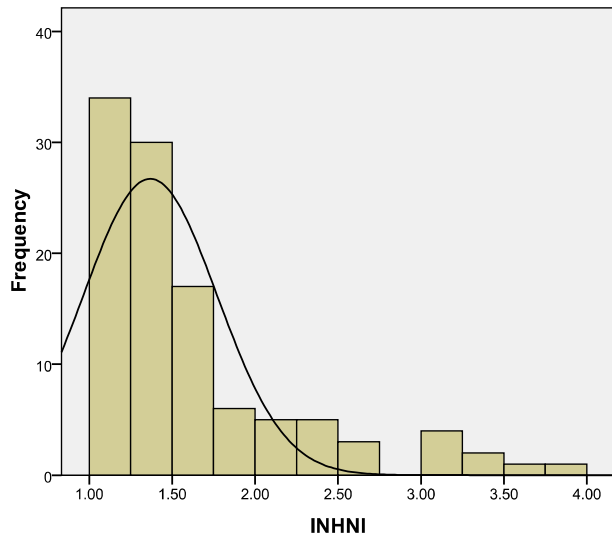
Mean =2.16
Std. Dev. =0.785
N=119

Shame



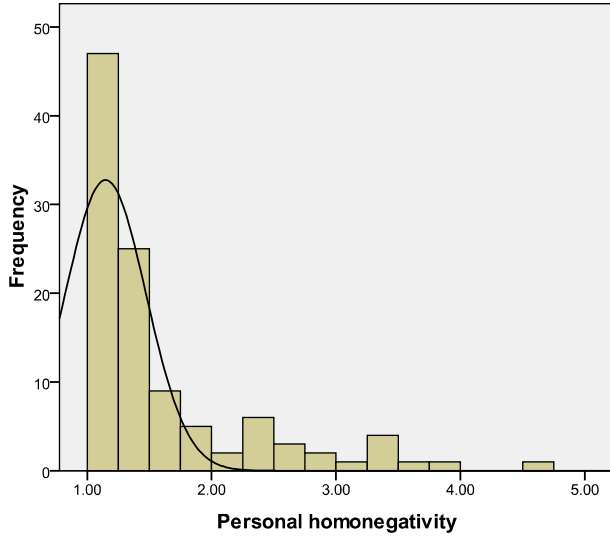
Mean =2.00
Std. Dev. =0.751
N=108

INHNI



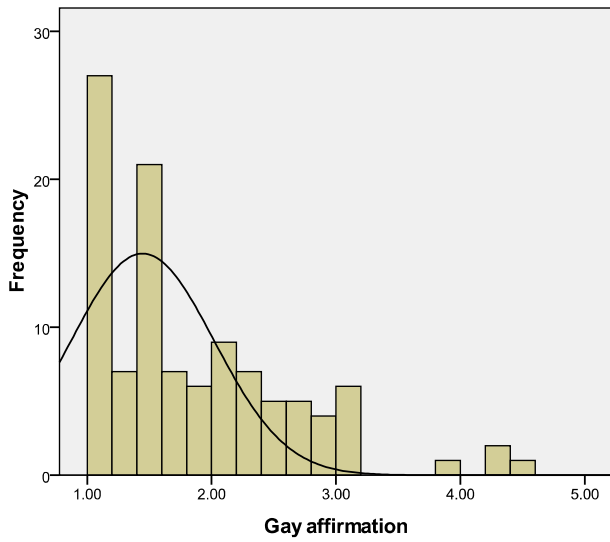
Mean =1.61
Std. Dev. =0.629
N=108

Personal homonegativity



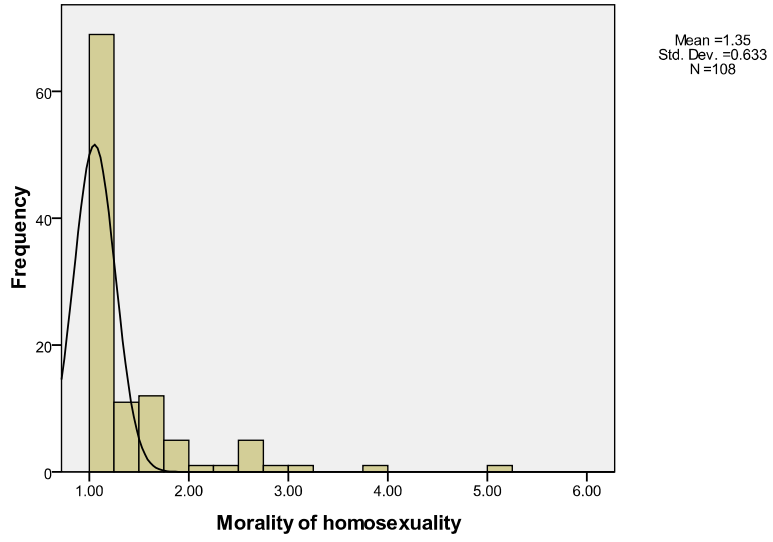
Mean =1.57
Std. Dev. =0.743
N=107

Gay affirmation



Mean =1.84
Std. Dev. =0.788
N=108

Morality of homosexuality



**APPENDIX K.
REGRESSION PLOT OF INTERNALIZED HOMONEGATIVITY**

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

