

Introduction of the sexual orientation sociology essay



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Thesis statement: sexual orientation has an important influence on the emotional life of college students. The very majority of college students have a heterosexual orientation, while few college students have a homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation. The Contemporary college students' sexual orientation is comparatively healthy.

College students are the main builders and successors of socialism. They play a pivotal role in the social and human development. However, sexual orientation has an important influence on the emotional life of college students. Therefore, it's meaningful to study Contemporary college students' sexual orientation. With the deepening study of sex, the research on sexual orientation is receiving increasing attention from psychologists both at home and abroad. Through its research, people can better acknowledge the phenomenon, improve their sensitivity and awareness of sexual relationship and behavior. This article gives a general introduction about the sex and its theoretical study knowledge; besides, it mainly studies the heterosexual orientation, homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation among students and factors that influence it. Through the study, we found, the very majority of college students have a heterosexual orientation, while few college students have a homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation. However, compared with the past few years, the rate of homosexual orientation is taking on rising tendency. In conclusion, the Contemporary college students' sexual orientation is comparatively healthy.

[Key words]: sexual orientation, heterosexual orientation, homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation, asexual orientation

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Introduction

Although sexual orientation is a fresh vocabulary, it is an old topic. Generally speaking, sexual orientation is likely to be ignored by most people. Since ancient times, in people's subconscious, they accepted the fact that it's natural and proper for man and woman to be together. In fact, except heterosexual orientation, sexual orientation also includes homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation, and asexual orientation. Traditionally, the very majority of people have a heterosexual orientation, while few people have a homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation. However, with the development of globalization and the impact of western culture, people's culture value and sexual orientation have some change, especially among the college students. Receiving the higher education, college students are more inclined to accept new ideas and follow the new trend.

This paper conducts an overall study of college students' sexual orientation. It consists of six parts. The first part is the brief introduction of the purpose and organization of this paper. The second part is the general account of the sexual orientation. The third part is the data and a brief analysis. The fourth part is the brief introduction and analysis of heterosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation in Contemporary college students. The fifth part is the general introduction and analysis of homosexual orientation in Contemporary college students. The last part is the conclusion of the whole paper.

2. The general introduction of the sexual orientation

The basic concepts of sexual orientation

Sexual orientation, also known as sexual preference, refers to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions to men, women, or both sexes. Sexual orientation also refers to a person's sense of identity based on those attractions, related behaviors, and membership in a community of others who share those attractions[[1]]. Typically, sexual orientation can be classified into three categories: heterosexual orientation, homosexual orientation, bisexual orientation. In addition, there is asexual orientation, but it is still controversial. In the different cultures and countries, there are descriptions about the diversity of sexual orientation.

The definition of sexual orientation is not just contain or rely on sex, but also depends on a person's performance on the durable attract on sexual and romantic feelings. Adolescence is the critical formation of sexual orientation. It is a period when children separate from their parents and families and begin to search for their goals and life. Adolescence is the process of going from childhood to maturity. In this period, teenagers are curious and confused about many things. Naturally, many youths may question their sexual feelings. Becoming aware of sexual feelings is a normal phenomenon at this time. Sometimes they have same-sex feelings or experiences causing confusion about their sexual orientation. Generally speaking, this confusion appears to decline over time and generate different outcomes for different individuals. Therefore, it's important for us to give some care and guide to teenager in this period.

Theoretical study basis of sexual orientation

Western scholars hold two theoretical perspectives on the formation of sexual orientation that is essentialism and social constructionism. Horowitz and Newcomb pointed out that 'essentialist perspective view that sexual orientation is genetically determined. This orientation may be related to biological sex or may be not. The formation of the individual's sexual orientation is a gradually found himself and an essentially true sexual orientation process'[[2]. While socialist constructivist view that sexual orientation is not genetically determined, but formed by a continuous two-way interaction between the individual and the social environment. Therefore, the development of sexual orientation is throughout the entire life of the individual and is variable.

2. 2. 1 Some views about the constituent components of sexual orientation

Kinsey regards sexual action as the defining feature of the sexual orientation of the individual. Money (1978) amplifies the scope of human sexual orientation and graphically described the structure of sexual orientation as love-map, including four areas, that is, sex, erotic and affectional feelings, fantasies and activities.

Garnets (2000) proposed that sexual orientation is a complex, flexible, multi-faceted, as for content, she absorbed partly Money's view and further classified sexual orientation involving a variety of content into affectional attraction, erotic attraction and love.[[3]Garnets (2002) further modify the content of the sexual behavior as sexual behavior, erotic-affectional

behaviors and fantasies, emotional attachments, self-identification and current relationship status.

Some views about the classification of sexual orientation

There are mainly four methods to classifying sexual orientation, that is, dichotomy, trichotomy, a seven-category system and pedigree-combination method. Among them, the last two methods are more important and popular.

A seven-category system was proposed by Alfred Kinsey, he asserts that sexuality is prone to change over time, and that sexual behavior can be understood both as physical contact as well as purely psychological phenomena. Instead of three categories, a seven-category system was used. The Kinsey scale ranked sexual behavior from 0 to 6, with 0 being completely heterosexual and 6 completely homosexual. A 1 was considered to be strictly heterosexual, a 2 mostly heterosexual and more than incidentally homosexual, a 3 equally homosexual and heterosexual, and so on. An additional category X was created for those who experienced no sexual desire[[4].

Pedigree-combination method is a method mostly supported by western researchers, main representative is Garnets. Garnets put forward, 'sexual orientation is complex, flexible and multifaceted. Each individual may have both heterosexual and homosexual orientations', at which point she and Kinsey are consistent with each other. But the difference is, she is not support the seven-category system. She asserts that the heterosexual and homosexual orientation respectively form band spectrum system according

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to degree and strength. Individual's orientation reflects the combination of these two in the genealogy positioning, namely the combination of individual's heterosexual orientation degree and its homosexual orientation degree.

Heterosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation in Contemporary college students

This article's data is taken from the survey named 'the college students' sexual orientation questionnaire' on www.sojump.com. 300 people take part in the questionnaire and the survey includes 10 questions about student attitudes toward homosexuality. According to the questionnaire, 91.11% of students choose absolutely heterosexual orientation; 2.63% of students choose heterosexual orientation as dominant orientation, but have homosexual experience; 6.12% of students choose absolutely homosexual orientation. There nearly no students choose bisexual orientation and asexual orientation. As we can see, heterosexuality is still the mainstream, but compared to the previous data, the number of homosexuality takes on a rising trend; the number of bisexual and asexual is relatively stable, no palpable changes. Therefore, this article will mainly focus on the discussion and analysis of homosexual orientation and give a brief introduction of heterosexual orientation, bisexual orientation and asexual orientation.

3. 1 Heterosexual orientation in Contemporary college students

Among the four orientations, heterosexual orientation occupies the almost majority population. Heterosexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or behavior between persons of opposite sex or gender in the gender binary.

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As a sexual orientation, heterosexuality refers to “ an enduring pattern of or disposition to experience sexual, affectionate, physical or romantic attractions to persons of the opposite sex”; it also refers to “ an individual’s sense of personal and social identity based on those attractions, behaviors expressing them, and membership in a community of others who share them”.

Traditionally, since ancient times, in people’s subconscious, they accepted the fact that it’s natural and proper for man and woman to be together. When we born, we saw our parents deeply love each other. In that time, in our consciousness, we had been unconsciously indoctrinated a mindset of heterosexual. When we grow up, we see the people around us have a Heterosexual relationship. Therefore, we naturally long for a ‘ prince and princess’ love relationship. Family and social environment are two main factors that lead us to a Heterosexual orientation.

3. 2 Bisexual orientation in Contemporary college students

A bisexual person is someone who is sexually or emotionally attracted to people of all genders. Many people who experience a wide range of feelings towards both men and women use the term bisexual. However, that doesn’t mean that one’s feelings are equally strong for different genders. That’s because when they are interested in someone, they actually focus on the person, not their gender. And the level of emotion and attraction that bisexuals feel for a certain gender varies from people to people. In medical and psychological circles bisexuality is a very real and genuine orientation. Being bisexual may be a phrase or can be a lifetime, and the lasting period also varies from people to people. Naturally, we may draw a conclusion that <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-of-the-sexual-orientation-sociology-essay/>

a bisexual people face a different choice to be homosexual or heterosexual. Don't make the mistake of assuming that there are only two options to choose from. There is a wide range of feelings and identities people experience, not just straight and gay or lesbian. Bisexuality is an option in their own rights. At the very beginning, some lesbians or gay men may "come out" as bisexual, but most bisexuals remain bisexual for the rest of their lives. The lack of information about bisexuality may be the cause of most of the confusion. To be bisexual, doesn't mean a person have to be with a man and a woman at the same time. Just because someone has the ability to be attracted to more than one gender, doesn't mean they are necessarily involved with more than one at any time. Monogamy is no different to bisexuals as it is for anyone else. Therefore, it's their own choices to be what they want and like.

3. 3 Asexual orientation in Contemporary college students

Asexuality refers to the lack of sexual attraction to anyone or low or absent interest sexual activity. But so far whether asexuality is a sexual orientation is still controversial. They hold indifferent attitudes towards both men and women and don't interest in any party. However, due to their gender or the experience, they will have some appreciation for a particular sex. Asexual people usually find it difficult to generate a lot of goodwill for people, nor does disgust.

Asexual is different from the ascetic and celibate. They generally do not affect by religious factors. They hold an indifferent attitude for men and women. Because of various reasons, such as the hope to find a partner or desire to have children, they have sex with others, despite their lack of

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sexual desire or sexual attraction. Until recently, more scientists admit asexuality is a sexual orientation and conduct a series of studies and interpretations from the perspective of sociology and psychology. But there still are some people opposing to asexuality as a sexual orientation.

The term asexuality is not absolutely accurate and don't have limitation on romantic emotions. Therefore, asexuality can be romantic or not. Part of the asexuality will fall in love with a person. Accurately speaking, asexuality is the lack of interest in sex, rather than the lack of love. According to AVEN, this kind of people is called romance asexual. According to the people that asexual fall in love with, romantic asexual can be divided into homoromantic asexual, heteroromantic asexual, biromantic asexual and aromantic asexual who neither like women nor men nor have romantic emotion.

4. Homosexual orientation in Contemporary college students

Compared with old times, the number of homosexual orientation takes on a rising trend. With the development of globalization and the impact of western culture, more and more people are inclined to be gay or lesbian. Homosexuality is a romantic attraction, sexual attraction, or sexual activity between members of the same sex or gender. As an orientation, homosexuality refers to “ an enduring pattern of or disposition to experience sexual, affectionate, or romantic attractions” primarily or exclusively to people of the same sex. “ It also refers to an individual’s sense of personal and social identity based on those attractions, behaviors expressing them, and membership in a community of others who share them.[[15] The study of homosexual orientation in college students is very significant.

4. 1 The causes of homosexual orientation in college students

The causes of homosexual orientation in college students are all-round. In the main, there are two major factors, that is, congenital factors and acquired factors.

4. 1. 1 Congenital factors

Nowadays, we are unsure about whether the formation of homosexuality is innate or acquired. According to an American Psychiatric survey made in 1922, among the 508 respondents, 72% of psychiatrists hold the opinion that homosexuality arises because of physiological factors, such as genetics, the development of hormones before the birth of baby and so on. Scientists, psychologists and psychiatrists are in a fierce debate on the causes of homosexuality. However, what we can be sure is that the issue of homosexuality needs to be scientifically and future proven.

4. 1. 2 Acquired factors

1) A serious setback in the straight Relationship. Some people once had one or more deep straight relationships and then failed which leads them to no longer have faith in the opposite sex. Deeper the love, deeper the scare is. Therefore, next time they become fearsome, exclusive and afraid to be hurt again. Gradually, they do not trust the opposite sex and have feeling for them. They think homosexual relationship is secure and reliable. If they casually encounter the one also deeply hurt in the straight relationships, it is easy for them to be sympathetic and turn the care into intimacy, generate the love and can not leave each other. Naturally they think if we are happy

why we can't be together. We have the right to choose our own life without damaging others' interests. That's one major reason.

2) Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse causes great damage to the development of young people, reflected in both psychological and physiological aspects. It will make a people feel confused about their identity and gender. For women, the people violating them may be their neighbor, father, brother, uncle and so on. Take the relatives for instance, she used to trust them and feel safe around them. Suddenly, one day one of them violate her, broke her comfortable environment and sense of security, she will lose faith in these people and hate the men all over the world. In order to protect themselves, they completely shut these people outside their inner world, no longer have any trust in them. But as we all know, requiring protection is a natural psychology of women. Without the protection of men, they will turn to the same sex. If the same sex has the same tendency, then two people will easily fall into the trap of homosexuality. For men, when they are sexually abused, at first they may don't know what it was and feel very sad and shameful. However, they feel a moment of pleasure and happy at the same time. Another very important reason, a lot of sexually abused gay come from a broken family and has a distance with his father. If another man has intimate behavior with them, to some extent, their desire for love and care is satisfied inspite they know what they are doing is wrong.

3) Special environment. As we all know that homosexuality is very popular in the military and prison. The reason is that homosexuality is closely related to their environment. When they are in one-sex environment, the most typical is the prisons, military, psychiatric hospitals, boarding school for boys and <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-of-the-sexual-orientation-sociology-essay/>

girls' boarding school, monasteries and convents, their desires and needs can't be satisfied. Therefore, in order to meet the psychological and physiological needs, they have no choice but to turn to the same sex. One gay once said, ' I stayed in the army for many years. The army is strictly prohibited the intimate relationship between men and women, not to mention the sex. Just as prisoners, sailors, miners and other industries, the special social context of life will naturally have a special sexual lifestyle'. Another example we can see in the movie Brokeback Mountain. Two cowboy Jack and Ennis, used aren't gay, had a one-night relationship and gradually generate the love due to the lonely and tedious grazing life.

4. 2 Students attitudes towards the homosexuality

Different country and different religion have different attitudes towards the homosexuality. According to the survey, Chinese public hold a very high degree of acceptance on homosexuality, so do the college students. Lack of recognized religion is one important reason. The western country having certain religion, the degree of acceptance is comparatively low. In Christianity, homosexuality is abominable sin. In Judaism they prohibit the sexual behavior of two men, while disgust the sexual behavior of two women. In Islam they absolutely prohibit homosexuality. In Confucianism they emphasize that everything in the world consist of yin and yang. These religious factors subconsciously affect people's attitudes towards the homosexuality.

Based on the survey, on the question of " how do you think of homosexuality"; the 20% of students think it is not wrong, 30% of adults considered it " a bit wrong", but not completely wrong; nearly 40% of the <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-of-the-sexual-orientation-sociology-essay/>

people that it is “ completely wrong”. There are nearly 10% of students’ attitudes are unknown. In other words, the students’ attitudes are very moderate. Whether the people see the gay or lesbian around them reflects the visibility of homosexuality in a society. Because homosexual, whether the society see them, objectively exist. The society having a high degree of acceptance on homosexuality has a high visibility of homosexuality. In university, the visibility of homosexuality is low.

When asked “ if you know a person is gay or lesbian, will you make friends with him”, the answer for this question adequately indicate the kindness of college students. More than 60% of students say they will remain friendship; only 10% of the people refuse to be friends with gay or lesbian. It is noteworthy that this ratio is much higher than the proportion of people who fully accept homosexuality. That is, although there is quite a large group of people hold the opinion that homosexuality is wrong, but they do not repel them.

4. 3 The therapeutic effect of homosexuality

Some major national mental health organizations have expressed concerns about therapies promoted to modify sexual orientation. Generally speaking, there are six methods used to the treatment of homosexuality at home and broad. That is, behavioral therapy, empathy therapy, environmental therapy, psychotherapy, drug therapy and surgical therapy. The use of each method varies from person to person. They can be used alone or interchangeably. However, there has been no scientifically adequate research to show that therapy aimed at changing sexual orientation is safe or effective.

Furthermore, it seems likely that the promotion of change therapies
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reinforces stereotypes and contributes to a negative climate for lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons. Helpful responses of a therapist treating an individual who is at loss about his same-sex attractions include helping the person actively cope with social prejudices against homosexuality, successfully resolve issues connected with and resulting from internal conflicts and helping him actively lead a happy and satisfying life.

5. Conclusion

According to the survey, for contemporary college students, heterosexuality is still the mainstream; the number of bisexual and asexual is relatively stable, no palpable changes. But compared to the previous data, the number of homosexuality takes on a rising trend. Overall, the sexual orientation of the contemporary college students is relatively healthy. However, we need to pay more attention to homosexuality. Professor Liu Dalin divided the awareness of Chinese public towards homosexuality into three stages: the first stage is that homosexuality is guilt; the second stage is that homosexuality is innocent but abnormal, pathological; the third stage is that homosexual, like heterosexual, is a kind of normal sexuality.[[6] Currently, China is in the process of transformation from the first stage to the second stage. China is a country severely affected by feudalism, but with the development of society, the numbers of homosexual, bisexual and asexual will definitely increase. That will be a huge social problem. As contemporary college students, we are more receptive to new things. We should rationally deal with the homosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality and give them more love and understanding. Love is a beautiful thing. Everyone have the right to love and be loved. It is regardless of race and gender. Therefore, which

sexual orientation should we have is up to ourselves. What the most important thing is follow you heart and find your soulmate.