

## Abstract

The aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between internalized homonegativity and overall psychological well-being characterized by a positive sense of self, improved functioning in interpersonal relationships and lower levels of psychopathological symptoms, with a focus on the role of perceived social support and level of preferred defense mechanisms. A convenience sample of 60 lesbian and gay young adults, contacted through recognized LGBTI organizations in two big cities of Turkey – İstanbul and Ankara – participated in the study. A computer program, together with a survey package, was used. The computer program used Eprime-2 software for the application of Implicit Association Test (IAT). Survey package included Stage Allocation Measure (SAM), Hudson & Ricketts Homophobia Scale (HRHS), The Defense Style Questionnaire (DSQ), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), Social Comparison Scale (SCS), Scale of Dimensions of Interpersonal Relationships (SDIP) and Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), together with Demographic Information and Consent Forms. Internalized homonegativity was expected to impair overall well-being, with mediating effects of perceived social support and preferred defense mechanisms. Yet, the results revealed that internalized homonegativity did have a significant correlation with hostility, but not with overall well-being. The impairing effects of internalized homonegativity on overall well-being might hence be rather indirect, through the involvement of increased hostility and eroded social support. The hypothesized relations of perceived social support and

level of preferred defense mechanisms with overall well-being were in the expected directions: Participants who reported higher levels of perceived social support and less reliance on immature defense mechanisms displayed higher levels of well-being. Although the initial hypothesis on mediation was not confirmed, a moderation model was supported as participants with higher levels of internalized homonegativity received more benefits in terms of overall well-being in case of a decrease in their immature defense use. The major theoretical and clinical implications of this study are discussed, together with suggestions for future research.