

# Gender and Personality differences in attitudes towards same-sex parenting amongst Dublin Business School students.

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## Abstract

The primary purpose of this research was to investigate attitudes towards same-sex parenting in an Irish context and to focus on gender and personality differences in participant's attitudes. The main finding of the current research has been that there are gender differences in attitudes towards same-sex parenting.

## Introduction

The current study aims to look at gender along with personality differences in attitudes towards same-sex parenting within an Irish context. In reviewing the current literature in the area there was none to be found within an Irish context, this void creates an opportunity to investigate attitudes towards same-sex parenting in an Irish context. A study into LGBT parents in Ireland carried out by Dr Jane Pillinger and Paula Fagan found that though many LGBT parents are legal guardians to the children they raise, 16% have no legal status as parents. This means that 51 of the 272 children involved in the study are being raised by a person with whom they have no legal relationship (Pillinger & Fagan 2013).

## Methods

In order to carry out the research it was decided that quantitative research methods would be used. The research design is quasi-experimental design, the independent variables (IV) are personality and gender and the dependent variable (DV) is attitudes towards same-sex parenting. The total number of participants for this study was 161, 51 males and 108 females, two participants did not provide their gender. The minimum age of male participants was 19, maximum was 49 and male participants had a mean age of 29. The minimum age of female participants was 20, maximum was 56 and there was a mean age of 31 amongst female participants.



## Results

Descriptive statistics illustrate that women scored higher than men on the personality measure used in the study, the mean score for females was 35.72 (SD = 3.38) and the mean score for males was 33.92 (SD = 4.02).

Hypothesis two predicted that there will be gender differences in attitudes towards gay men. An independent t-test was conducted to compare gender differences in attitudes towards gay men, this showed that there was no significant difference [ $t(145) = .323, p > .05$ ]. Therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

The findings of the six questions used to test hypothesis three that predicted that there will be gender differences in attitudes towards same-sex parenting, show males answering more negatively to all six questions compared to female responses, therefore the hypothesis is supported.

## Discussion

For the six questions used to test hypothesis three, males answered more negatively than females to all questions, therefore supporting the hypothesis that there would be gender differences in attitudes towards same-sex parenting. The findings of the current study are in line with previous studies. Whitley (1988) found that males held more negative attitudes towards the social roles of homosexuals. The social roles of homosexuals would include parenting therefore the findings of the current study support Whitley's (1988) findings.

## References

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