

Abstract: In spite of a long history of male-male eroticism, homosexuality is stigmatized in contemporary Japan. Public figures coming out as gay are rare, and homosexual people do not have the rights to marry or adopt children. At the same time, it is not uncommon to see gay TV celebrities appearing on various entertainment shows in Japan, presenting, however, only one specific and feminized facet of the broad spectrum of male homosexuality. A number of surveys have examined attitudes toward homosexuality, but they are done mostly in a Western context. This study, based on a series of surveys conducted in a national university in Southern Japan, focuses on attitudes towards male homosexuality in the eyes of the younger generation. Linear regression and ANOVA analyses are applied in order to examine the possible factors that affect respondents' attitudes toward male homosexuality, specifically regarding personal background (gender, age, birthplace, family background, parental education, social status) and personal experiences (reception of sex education, contact with gay men, BL manga readership, overseas experiences, knowledge about LGBT events). The results reveal that the respondents are more accepting toward male homosexuality when it comes to providing equal opportunity in job hunting and treating homosexual men equally, and also for relationships with a lower degrees of closeness to gay men (such as having a gay friend, or having a gay teacher). Meanwhile, for questions that implied higher degrees of closeness to gay men (such as embracing a gay son) and questions related to stereotypes, medico-scientific discourse, social norms, school life and LGBT-related activities on campus, respondents' attitudes were less accepting. Furthermore, this study indicates that having contact with gay men, sex education and LGBT knowledge played positive roles in respondents' attitudes toward male homosexuality. Ultimately, this study presents an analysis of how the younger generation in contemporary Japan perceives male homosexuality.