



**Relationship satisfaction in same-sex couples: The role of Romantic Attachment and Internalized Homophobia within the dyad**

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**Abstract**

*Introduction:* Along with insecure attachment styles, Internalized Homophobia (IH, defined as the internalization of negative views about homosexuality by LGB people) is known to negatively impact both the psychological well-being of LGB people and the quality of their romantic relationships. However, little is known on the interaction between attachment and IH in determining same-sex partners' relationship satisfaction, as well as the dyadic effect of IH within couples who live in highly heteronormative contexts such as Italy. The aim of our study was to better understand the impact of IH among Italian LGB partners considering both an individual and a dyadic perspective. Specifically, we investigated for the first time the mediating role of IH on the association between romantic attachment and relationship satisfaction, as well as potential reciprocal effects of IH on partners' relational satisfaction. *Methods:* 52 same-sex couples (24 female-female and 28 male-male; mean age = 29.6 yrs.; SD = 9.3) participated in an online survey, including self-report measures of romantic attachment (ECR-R), internalized homophobia (MISS-LG), and relationship satisfaction (GLRSS). Data were analyzed using mediational analyses and Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM). *Results:* IH significantly mediated the association between attachment anxiety and relationship satisfaction, while attachment avoidance was found to only have a direct negative effect on the latter. APIM analyses showed both significant intrapersonal (actor) and interpersonal (partner) effects of IH on each partner's relationship satisfaction. *Discussion:* Our results confirm previous findings suggesting that insecure attachment orientations and IH are significantly associated with lower relationship satisfaction in same-sex partners. Furthermore, the two dimensions seem to play a complex effect on each partner's satisfaction levels, which seem to be influenced by their individual attachment style as well as both their own and their partner's internalized homophobia. These findings deepen our knowledge regarding LGB people's



relational peculiarities and underline the complexity of factors involved in one's own relationship satisfaction, thus providing crucial insights for clinical work with LGB people, both single and romantically involved.