

Negotiating Multiple Marginalizations:

Experiences of South Asian LGBQ Individuals

Research suggests that multiple minority stressors (racism, heterosexism etc.) may contribute to greater psychological distress experienced by people with multiple minority identities (such as South Asian LGB individuals). This additive stress is referred to as Minority Stress (Meyer, 2003) and while the minority stress-psychological distress link is increasingly well-established in the literature for LGBQ people of color, there is no research specifically on South Asian LGBQ individuals. This study was the first of its kind to specifically study this unique population

142

Respondents

67% Men
30% Women
3% Genderqueer
/Transgender/
Other Gender

77% Indian Origin

10% Pakistani Orig.
7% Other
3% Bangladeshi Orig.
3% Sri Lankan Orig.

Sample mostly middle class (61%), educated (63% with a graduate degree) and exclusively or mostly gay or lesbian (86%)



Outness moderated relationship between racist events and psychological distress. Respondents with high racist events and high outness reported highest levels of psychological distress.



Surprisingly, outness not directly associated with psychological distress! This could be due to the fact that some studies say outness is inconsequential as long as heteronormative community expectations are upheld



Heterosexist Discrimination = Discrimination faced due to one's sexual minority status
Internalized Heterosexist Discrimination = marginalization resulting from adopting the negative messages and attitudes about sexual minorities

Acculturation (identification with dominant culture) and enculturation (identification with culture of origin) did not account for variation in psychological distress. Studies suggest that links between psychological wellbeing and acculturation/enculturation might be too complex to explain with simplistic models. In this study, higher acculturation and education of sample could also be reason for lack of significance

Counseling Implications

- Attention to be paid to issues of acculturation, discrimination and outness
- Important to not make assumptions regarding distress based on the reported level of outness or alignment with sexual Identity
- Do not generalize: unique variations among South Asian community



South Asian LGBQ individuals experience stressors similarly to other LGBQ groups, particularly LGBQ Asian American individuals and other groups of color...

Limitations and Future Directions

- ◆ Educated sample with ties to online South Asian LGBQ Groups (for e.g. participants could be more out or more comfortable with sexuality)
- ◆ Participants had higher levels of education and income: social class and income are protective factors with distress
- ◆ Future studies with more diverse sample need
- ◆ Need to look at experiences of genders separately

Study made possible by participation by South Asian sexual minority participants: Thank you!
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