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Impact of Internalized homonegativity, Sexual orientation concealment and Resilient coping on emotional, social and psychological well-being: A study on sexual minorities in India

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Statement of the problem: Homosexuality is still viewed as a social disgrace in many countries, including India where public discussions of sexuality and sexual orientation are still taboo. Positioning heterosexuality as a norm leads to the marginalization and exclusion of minority identity. This leads to the perception of homosexuality as a stigma and a morally deviant form of human behavior. The prevalence of stigma leads to the internalization of negative attitudes towards homosexual identity. In Indian culture, expressing one's sexual orientation and subsequent behavior is discouraged, and this is reinforced by law and social values. Because of the threat of violence and alienation from families, friends, and society at large, this group is forced to hide their identity or sexuality which leads to minority stress. Efforts to conceal sexual orientation may delay the development of a positive self-concept and diminish well-being among sexual minorities. Successful coping in such circumstances leads to positive sexual identity and well-being. The present study attempts to understand the relationship between internalized homonegativity, sexual orientation concealment, and resilient coping on emotional, social, and psychological well-being among sexual minorities in India.

Methodology: This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to explore the research objectives. The sample comprised 230 cisgender homosexuals (204 gays and 26 lesbians) from Pan India, ages ranging from 15-58 years. Snowball sampling was used to collect data in both online and offline mode). The statistical analysis conducted was a measure of central tendencies like Mean and S.D., Bivariate analysis like correlation, and multivariate analysis like regression analysis.

Findings: Results revealed that after controlling for socio-demographic variables, Internalized homonegativity and sexual orientation significantly predicted psychological well-being and, resilient coping significantly predicted social and psychological well-being. Additionally, it was observed that among socio-demographic variables, age, place of residence, monthly income, and education qualification significantly predicted emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

Conclusion & Significance: This study reveals the impact effects of internalized homonegativity and concealment of sexual orientation on the well-being of sexual minorities in India while highlighting the protective role of resilient coping strategies. Its findings underscore the need for culturally sensitive interventions to mitigate stigma and promote mental health equity within this marginalized population as well as overall social awareness programs.

Biography

Shivangi Gupta is a pioneer researcher in the field of sexual minorities and mental health. Her expertise is in the area of positive psychology. Her work focuses on understanding the unique challenges faced by sexual minorities in India and their impact on mental health and well-being. Her work tries to integrate Meyer's minority stress model and Keyes' model of mental health, providing a comprehensive framework for addressing the complex intersections of identity, stigma, and resilience among Indian sexual minorities. Her work sheds light on the psychological experiences of the marginalized as well as informs culturally sensitive policies aimed at promoting mental health, equity, and social justice in India.

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