
ABSTRACT

Japanese LGB people's experiences related to their sexual orientation: Focusing on minority stress

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Sexual minorities such as lesbian, gay, and bisexual people (LGBs) are exposed to various stressors due to social stigma associated with their sexual orientation. However, there are few studies in Japan that focus on LGBs' daily experiences from their own perspective. In this study, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 LGB undergraduate and graduate students and investigated their experiences related to their sexual orientation. The results show that LGBs have positive experiences stemming from their commitment to their own community and culture, but they are exposed to various proximal stressor-associated stigmas such as internalized stigma, perception of prejudice, fear of expected rejection, heterosexual camouflage, and discomfort with heterosexism. Moreover, their experiences are related to the degree of acceptance of their own LGB identity and depend on their sexual orientation. Our results suggest the importance of future research on LGB mental health in terms of stigma-related experiences and people's acceptance of their own LGB identity.

Key Words: lesbian, gay, bisexual, identity, minority stress
