

Social Acceptance and Isolation: Exploring Discrimination and its Impact on the Psychological Well-being of Older Men Who Have Sex with Men

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Abstract

The exploration of discrimination, social acceptance, and their impact on the psychological well-being of older men who have sex with men (MSM) is a critical area of study within LGBTQ+ research. Older MSM face significant health disparities, including higher rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues compared to their heterosexual counterparts. These disparities stem from the social and cultural stigma surrounding homosexuality, leading to prejudice and exclusion from the general population. This study aims to investigate the relationship between discrimination, social acceptance, and the psychological well-being of older MSM residing in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Hong Kong, and Taiwan. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among N=453 participants, with N=151 individuals from each region. The survey included the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12), the Discrimination and Self-Stigma Evaluation Scale (DSSSES), and the Perceived Acceptance Scale (PAS). The GHQ-12 scores indicated a moderate level of psychological distress among participants (M=6.38, SD=2.55). The DSSSES scores (M=27.78, SD=8.73) revealed that participants experienced discrimination in their daily lives. The PAS scores (M=3.08, SD=0.48) indicated a moderate level of perceived social acceptance. These findings suggest that discrimination and social acceptance levels vary among older MSM in different regions of PRC, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The study highlights the significant impact of discrimination and social acceptance on the psychological well-being of older MSM. It emphasizes the importance of interventions aimed at reducing discrimination and promoting social acceptance to improve their psychological well-being.

Biography

Mr. Alex Chan is a Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) of the British Psychological Society in addition to having acquired full membership of American Psychological Association. Moreover, he is a local Registered Social Worker (RSW). With an initial PhD in psychology already under his belt, he is currently immersed in furthering his expertise through the pursuit of a second PhD in Applied Social Sciences at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Alex is committed to fostering equal opportunities and improving the wellbeing of LGBT community. His fields of study involve homosexuality, psychological well-being, LGBTQ social integration and clinical mental health studies. Beyond his academic endeavors, Alex actively contributes to the scientific community, holding key editorial positions. Serving as an associate editor for *Frontiers in Public Health* and *Frontiers in Urology*, Alex demonstrates leadership in multidisciplinary journals. Moreover, his role as a review editor for *Clinical Research in Nephrology* and an editorial board member for *BMC Public Health* and *Journal of Medicine Surgery and Public Health* underscores his dedication to advancing research in various fields related to social work intervention, public health and clinical psychology.

ALL ARE WELCOME