

Outline

Abstract

Keywords

1. Introduction
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Discussion

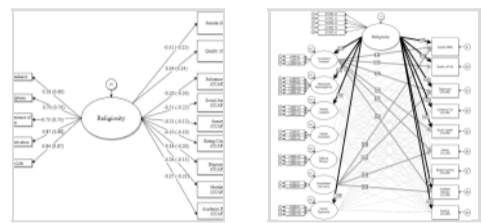
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Sexual minorities, mental health, and religiosity at a religiously conservative university

Jared S. Klundt ^a, David M. Erekson ^b , Austin M. Lynn ^c, Hannah E. Brown ^c^a Encircle Therapy, Salt Lake City, UT, United States of America^b Counseling and Psychological Services, Brigham Young University, United States of America^c Department of Psychology, Brigham Young University, United States of America

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Abstract

With increasing mental health concerns on college campuses and the complex developmental tasks of young adulthood, sexual minority students may be at particular risk for negative mental health and well-being outcomes. This risk may be compounded at highly religious universities that are not affirming of same-sex romantic relationships. The current study examined religiosity, mental health outcomes, and sexual minority identity at a highly religious university using structural equation modeling. All undergraduates were invited to participate, and 7625 students participated, with 996 students indicating a sexual orientation other than “strictly heterosexual.” We found that sexual minority students had significantly worse mental health outcomes and well-being than their heterosexual peers. We also found that religiosity acted as a protective factor for both the sexual minority and the heterosexual group, although the effect was weaker for the sexual minority group. Finally, we found that for sexual minority students, concerns around being accepted by others was the greatest predictor of lower quality of life and higher suicidality, depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety, and academic distress. We discuss potential strategies to mitigate acceptance concerns for sexual minority students on college campuses.

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Keywords

LGBQ; Mental health; Well-being; Religiosity; Religious university; University students

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