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Gender Identity on Mental Health: Lived Experiences Among Selected Psychology Students at a Private University in Manila

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ABSTRACT

The growing social acceptance of members of the LGBTQ community has seen a meaningful development in recent years, however it is not widely an acceptable norm especially in countries that are mostly conservative and Christian, where pockets of resistance continue to exhibit prejudicial attitude towards sexual minority groups. Social stigma and discrimination are contributory stressors to the everyday life of sexual minority groups and often led not only to higher rates of mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression but adversely impacts their overall quality of life. This qualitative study aims to explore the lived experiences of selected psychology students at a private university in Manila in relation to their gender identity and mental health. The struggles faced by young adults in their journey towards a better understanding of their gender identity is socially sensitive and complex which requires a careful analysis of their lived experiences. The inequalities in the wellbeing among adolescents and young adults in relation to gender and sexual identity are indicators of mental health difficulties which reveal higher level of depression and anxiety. Thus, mental wellbeing of sexual gender minority (SGM) has been mostly affected by the stigma and high level of discriminatory social attitude towards LGBTQ population which do not only affect their mental wellbeing but also serve as barriers to their mental healthcare services.

Keywords: psychology, mental wellbeing, gender identity, qualitative design, sexual minority group